HOURS WITH THE BIBLE;

OR,

THE SCRIPTURES IN THE LIGHT OF MODERN KNOWLEDGE.

BY

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AN ENTIRELY NEW EDITION, REVISED THROUGHOUT
AND LARGELY REWRITTEN.

ILLUSTRATED.

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PREFACE.

THE great advance in every branch of Biblical knowledge which has marked the ten years during which *Hours with the Bible* have been before the world, has necessarily thrown much fresh light on the Sacred Records, from many sources. Egypt, Assyria, and Babylonia have, alike, contributed largely to the illustration of these historical, archæological, geographical, and philological details, elucidating and illuminating countless points hitherto imperfectly understood or wholly overlooked.

This new edition is the fruit of continuous effort through successive years, to note each particular of progressive Bible illustration from whatever direction, and that no industry has been spared in the pursuit of this aim will, I believe, be recognized from the list of authorities printed with this volume; more than half of them being new.

Since the original edition was published, moreover, I have travelled in Egypt, the Holy Land, and Syria, and have thus been able to give descriptions of the various localities in the Bible story from personal knowledge, which is very much better than any knowledge merely derived from books.

The translations of the Prophets have been carefully revised, and their countless allusions to manners and customs, local phenomena, contemporary history, and local topog-

raphy, made clearer and more vivid by the light of advancing knowledge ; the meaning of the text being thus often brought out much more fully and correctly than was possible in past years.

The latest translations of the Assyrian and Babylonian tablets, and the best renderings of those deciphered up to this time, are also given in all the volumes, making them, with the many other improvements and additions they contain, virtually new.

For the wide favour with which the earlier edition has been received, I feel grateful, and trust that this one may be even more extensively useful.

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HOURS WITH THE BIBLE.

CHAPTER I.

THE OPENING BOOK OF SCRIPTURE.

It is one of the most pleasing characteristics of our day that the thoughtful study of the Sacred Books of our religion is more widely extended than in any former time, and that it still continues to attract an ever greater attention. The great popularity of the original series of "Hours with the Bible," both in England and America, is a pleasing sign of this, and has led me to issue this enlarged and greatly improved edition, to the preparation of which I have devoted much labour. The mental activity of the age, which leaves no region of knowledge unexplored, in itself accounts for this zeal in the study of the Scriptures; for it would be strange, indeed, if the scientific spirit which busies itself with every undiscovered secret of nature, and with every trace of human interest in the history and literature of the past, should not turn with intense interest to the elucidation of writings so momentous in their claims and so engrossing in their details as those which make up the Bible.

The very first section of these venerable documents—known to us as "Genesis," or "The Beginning"—has a

fascination for students of every class. Though not the oldest literary monument of primitive mankind, it is so much above all other remains of early antiquity in its tone and contents, that no one can help feeling its immeasurable superiority to them. It stands, indeed, at the head of the literature of the world, for if more recent than some writings of Chaldæa or Egypt which have come down to us, it is incomparably the noblest composition of early ages, in its moral and spiritual characteristics. The libraries of Nineveh have yielded, in our day, a wonderful treasure of literature, and the papyri found in the tombs of Egypt have revealed much of great interest respecting the ancient dwellers in the Nile Valley; but neither from the mounds of the Euphrates nor the graves of the land of the Pharaohs has there been obtained anything that will compare, for its manifold value, with this Hebrew relic. Yet, in some cases, they awake a tender human interest. The most ancient manuscript known, for example, a papyrus bearing the title of "The Teaching of the Governor Ptah-hotep," which carries us back to the Fifth Dynasty of Egypt—well nigh three thousand years before Christ—gives us, in simple words, the thoughts of an old man on many points of morals and manners. "If thou art become great, after thou hast been humble," says the patriarch, "and if thou hast amassed riches after poverty, and hast become the first in thy town, if thou art known for thy wealth, and art become a great lord, let not thy heart become proud because of thy riches, for it is God who has given them to thee. Despise not another who is as thou wast: treat him as thy equal." With shrewd sense as well as kindliness he says, elsewhere, "If thou be wise furnish thy house well: woo thy wife and do not quarrel with her; nourish her,

deck her out, for fine dress is her greatest delight. Perfume her, make her glad, as long as thou livest : she is a blessing which her possessor should treat as becomes his own standing. Be not unkind to her." Nothing could be better than these counsels, but the contents of a brief papyrus cannot compare with the varied charms of a record like that of Genesis touching life, inner and outer, at so many points.

Assyria and Babylonia have preserved for us a vast collection of documents of all kinds, in the clay tablets of her ruined cities and palaces, and many of these are copies from originals far earlier than the age of Moses, but in their religious ideas they are immeasurably below the Hebrew standard, while, in other respects, they are mainly of antiquarian interest.

The design of Genesis, indeed, is, itself, enough to show its immeasurable superiority to all other remains of primeval literature, for it is an introduction to the story of the kingdom of God among men, from Eden to Calvary.

Human interests and occupations of all kinds are touched in the development of this one great subject, but they are noticed only as they bear on it, and always as strictly subordinate. The first chapter of the Bible reveals the supreme fact that there is but One, Only, and Living God, the moral Governor of the Universe : reigning in unquestioned majesty over all things ; the Creator of the heavens and the earth, and the God of the spirits of all flesh. Then follows the sad record of man's fall, and thus the way is opened to tell the great scheme for his restoration. A few chapters more link the earlier periods of the world with later times, and bring before us the first step in the re-establishment of the kingdom of God on earth, by

the selection of the family of Abraham as the depositary of the true religion, for future ages, and the instrument of their spiritual education. How the narrative henceforth follows on, introducing the successive generations of the patriarchs, to the settlement of their posterity in Egypt, we all know.

It throws a mysterious grandeur over the book of Genesis when we look at it in its relations to Scripture as a whole. Exodus takes up the narrative of the chosen people where the earlier book has left it; Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy and Joshua carry it on to the final settlement in Canaan. The book of Judges and those that follow lead us through eventful centuries, echoing with the psalms and thanksgivings of the faithful, but also with the denunciations of prophets, till, with Malachi, the canon is closed. Springing up at distant intervals through more than a thousand years; written in widely different states of society and culture; with men of all ranks, from the eastern king to the simple herdsman, among their authors, all the books of Scripture are found linked to each other in a mysterious harmony of tone and aim; the last completing what all the rest have slowly advanced. Genesis is thus the porch of the great temple of Revelation, leading, step by step, to the disclosure of Jesus Christ as the Lord and Head of the new kingdom of God.

But while thus unique in its relations to the history of religion, Genesis incidentally yields the richest attractions in subordinate details. It gives us glimpses of ancient life more than a thousand years before Herodotus, "the Father of History," was born.[1] The plains of Mesopotamia, the

[1] Herodotus and Nehemiah, the writer of the last historical book in the canon, were both alive in B.C. 444.

hills and uplands of Palestine, the pastures of the South, and the banks of the Nile, come before us, in succession, with their varied populations, customs and productions. We wander with shepherd tribes in the desert; see the ancient communities of Palestine, and the court life of Egypt in the time of perhaps its greatest glory. Nor are these notices of remote ages of doubtful accuracy, and thus of questionable worth. The picture of Egyptian life is proved to be minutely correct, by the evidence of contemporary monuments and documents. And in the same way, the glimpses of ancient races are incidentally corroborated by every advance of knowledge, and the story of primitive shepherd life is sustained to the full by the unchanging pastoral customs of the East, even now. Nor is the history given us in Genesis like the pompous inscriptions of equal antiquity left in Egypt or Babylon. Instead of lists of victories and sounding titles of kings, we have the every-day life of the populations: the light and shadow of human hopes and fears, the flesh and blood forms of beings like ourselves, though separated from us by forty centuries. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and a crowd of other personages introduced, are as real as if they had lived but yesterday.

One great feature of Scripture, from its first page to its last, should endear it to every one who cares for the welfare of humanity at large. All other writings of antiquity utterly fail to realize the inherent dignity of man, and ignore the existence of the people, except as a mere background to the deeds and glory of the few. In Egypt, the masses were held in contempt by the great, as the "stinking multitude," and we search in vain, in Egyptian inscriptions and literature, for any generous sentiment towards

them, or any recognition of their rights or importance in the State. In Asia, from the remotest times, even the high officers of the sovereign had been content to call themselves his slaves. It has been for him to command, and for all his subjects passively to obey his every caprice. In ancient Greece the citizens formed a privileged class, the mass of their fellow-countrymen counting for nothing; and it was the same in Rome, till citizenship was extended to all Italy, in B.C. 90, after the Social War. Thus, it marks antiquity everywhere, that privilege alone conferred nationality in any true sense, and that the commonalty at large were treated as a mere herd, without rights, and beneath notice.

In Scripture, however, including the book of Genesis, there breathes a higher spirit of liberty and respect to man. Instead of giving pompous recitals of the deeds of conquerors and kings, it follows the history of simple patriarchs and their households. Amidst the slavish splendours of Egypt it dwells on the fortunes of a humble shepherd tribe. His loyalty towards the One Living God raises even the exiled Jacob to a prominence in it that is not assigned to rank or power. It enters the shepherd's tent; it follows him in his simple occupations; it turns aside from the palaces of Zoan to bend its regards on the lowly inmates of the Hebrew slave-quarter around. It sees no charms in the merely outward and accidental; the spiritual and essential alone are valued. If these be found on a throne, its occupant has corresponding notice, but if they have retired to the tent or the slave-hut, they are followed thither, and the throne is passed by, to reach them.

Respect for manhood, as such—involved in the very conception of a divine plan of Redemption—colours the whole

story of the Jewish people. From the first they have their simple patriarchal constitution, by which the community is represented in all its interests by "elders" chosen from its own members, and they retain these through all the oppression of Egypt, the wanderings of the desert, and the settled life of Canaan, till the destruction of the nation by the Romans. Despotism never extinguishes this vigorous national life. At times these elders are the link between higher authorities and the people; then, again, the community itself is seen gathered in a vast assembly, to hear and decide on great questions directly, but in all cases, popular liberty is respected, and the concurrence of the people as a whole, required in all public action. Thus, while the world at large was sunk in political slavery, the noblest ideas of liberty found a home in the pages of Scripture. In antiquity, these fostered a magnificent spirit of national independence which made the Jew invincible; for, though he might be overpowered, he never submitted. And in every age since, they have kindled the virtues of manhood in land after land; for the noblest inspirations of freedom have ever been found among the populations which have drunk in most of the spirit of the Bible. It has been the charter of human rights from the remotest ages, and it still silently protests against every social injustice and oppression. Even in Genesis the lesson is emphatically taught that all men are equal before God, and that true dignity consists not in mere outward rank or illustrious birth, but in the higher qualities of the intellect and of the heart.

Looking simply at Scripture itself, it seems impossible to escape the conclusion that Genesis and the other books of "the Law" are more or less a memorial of the great lawgiver, Moses. He may, indeed, have been helped by the

seventy elders, as the Rabbis assert in their traditions, for Ezra speaks of their having been received by Moses from God's "servants, the prophets;"[1] but the fact that they are spoken of from Joshua to Daniel and even Ezra,[2] as the "Book of the Law of Moses," appears to assume that he was recognized as their original author, though this by no means excludes their revision and expansion by inspired successors at a later date.[3] In the same way they are quoted in the New Testament as his.[4] That they are spoken of in some texts under various names, such as the Book of the Law of God, the Book of the Covenant, or simply "the Law," is of no weight against this, for we ourselves often use more names than one for the same thing. Nor is the introduction of passages such as that respecting the death of Moses, at the close of Deuteronomy, or of modifications of the laws given in earlier books, or amplifications of the narrative, any reason for assigning the original authorship to another than Moses, since some one else must have written the notice of his death, and others may well have expanded the narrative where it seemed desirable, while the altered circumstances of later ages must have led to modifications or developments of earlier laws, no longer suited to the wants of the time.[5]

It is not, indeed, necessary to suppose that the whole

[1] Ezra ix. 11.

[2] Joshua viii. 31. 1 Kings ii. 3. 2 Kings xiv. 6. 2 Chron. xxiii. 18; xxv. 4; xxxiv. 14. Ezra iii. 2; vii. 6. Neh. viii. 1. Dan. xi. 11, 13.

[3] See Valhinger, art. "Pentateuch," in Herzog's *Real Encyklopädie*.

[4] *e.g.*, Mark xii. 26. Luke ii. 22; xvi. 29; xxiv. 27, 44. John i. 17; vii. 23. Acts xiii. 39, etc., etc.

[5] Bertheau: *Die Sieben Gruppen Mos. Gesetze*, p. 19. Renan (*Histoire des Langues Sémitiques*, p. 117) quotes Philo's notice of Moses as a law-giver, rather than a historian; but his doing so weighs nothing against the fact, which Renan admits, that the Mosaic authorship was an established opinion in Christ's day—that is, immediately after Philo. See also Renan's *Études*, p. 88.

book of Genesis is an original composition of the great law-giver. On the contrary, its compiler evidently availed himself of existing documents, as in the story of creation, of which a first account extends to the third verse of the second chapter, while a second occupies the verses that follow. In the one we are told of God as the Creator; in the other of His moral government of the world. Even the name by which He is made known is changed, for in the first the word Elohim is used, a name for the Divine Being simply as such; while in the second He is revealed as Jehovah Elohim, marking to whom the great name of Elohim is to be given. There is no mention, in the first, of the creation of woman, or of the institution of marriage, or of the moral law imposed on the newly created; and, on the other hand, the Sabbath is introduced in the first and not in the second. Moses was evidently inspired to supplement the one account by the other, and thus make a fuller revelation, apparently from two primeval sources, than one by itself would have furnished. But it is only a question of literary interest, at best, to discuss the extent to which he may have been divinely led to employ materials already inviting his selection. Some portions he must have received by direct inspiration; others may have been derived from earlier documents or even traditions, purified from whatever was unworthy; others from personal knowledge. In any case, the book as it stands is to us the very word of God, speaking as only He could, through His servants, to mankind.

CHAPTER II.

ANCIENT IDEAS, SACRED AND PROFANE, OF GOD AND NATURE—A CONTRAST.

"THE first leaf of the Mosaic record," says Jean Paul, "has more weight than all the folios of men of science and philosophers." And he is right, for we owe to it the earliest and grandest revelation of that first principle of all religion—the existence, the unity, the personality, and the moral government of God.

It is in keeping with the whole colour of Jewish thought that the very opening of its literature should be thus especially occupied with such truths, for the whole history of the nation is simply that of its religion. Other races have chosen as their part a political career, or pre-eminence in art, or in philosophical speculation, or in social development; but, from first to last, the intellect of the Hebrew dwelt supremely on the matters of his faith. He never aspired to take a place among the great empires of antiquity, and has left no record of political revolutions effected by his conquests. The triumphs of the pencil or the chisel he left, with a contemptuous indifference, to Egypt, or Assyria, or Greece. The few great efforts of architecture in his country were the work of foreigners hired to erect them. The civilization of Babylon, Assyria, Egypt, or Phœnicia never took root in Palestine, and was,

indeed, abhorred by the strict Jew, as connected with heathen races whom he despised. The seaports of his country were held by other nationalities, and commerce on a great scale was utterly neglected, till Solomon turned merchant, and sent ships, built and manned by Phœnicians, on trading voyages; kindling, perhaps, by his eagerness and success that love of trading in the nation, which has for so many ages been its ruling passion.

Nor had the Jew any such interest in religious philosophy as has marked other peoples. The Aryan races, both east and west, might throw themselves with ardour into the high questions of metaphysics and theology; he contented himself with the utterances of revelation. It never occurred to him, as it did to the Hindoo or the Greek, to work out by his own reason the mysterious problems of nature—physical, human, or divine. What they strove to think out for themselves, he accepted as first truths, communicated to his fathers by the Almighty, which it was alike idle and impious to discuss. Many, no doubt, in every generation, indifferently illustrated the national instinct; but from the days of Abraham to the destruction of Israel as a local community, there were always leading spirits, who, by their intense fidelity to the hereditary spirit of their race, vindicated its character as in a special sense the people of God. The world may have inherited no advances in political science from the Hebrew, no great epic, no school of architecture, no high lessons of philosophy, no wide extension of human thought or knowledge in any secular direction; but he has given it its religion. To other races we owe the splendid inheritance of modern civilization and secular culture, but the religious education of mankind has been the gift of the Jew alone.

The account of creation with which Genesis opens, illustrates this. Its aim throughout is to lead from nature up to God, and in this it strikes the key-note of all that remains of Hebrew literature, which is now comprised in the narrow limits of the Bible.

It is impossible for us, with our hereditary knowledge of the Scriptures, to realize the greatness of the addition made to the religious knowledge of mankind by even the first chapter of Genesis. Primeval revelations of God had everywhere become corrupted in the days of Moses. The all-embracing heaven had become divine, and natural appearances—the sun, the moon, the stars, the clouds, the dawn—had gradually been deified as its children. In India and the East, this gradually developed into an identification of the Divine Being with nature. All we see or are; the visible universe; the affections, virtues, or vices—all the spiritual world of gods and genii came to be viewed as only manifestations of Brahma under multitudinous forms.[1] In Western Asia the primitive creed sank into an idolatry which regarded the countless powers or forces of the universe as separately divine, and so multiplied gods that an Assyrian king, about nine hundred years before Christ, tells us his countrymen worshipped sixty-five thousand *great* gods of heaven and earth. Even on the Euphrates and Tigris there may have lingered, as there long did in Egypt, a dim remembrance of *One* supreme God, but it was at best a secret and mysterious doctrine of the priests, lost to the world at large by the monstrous inventions of polytheism. In any case, this well-nigh faded recollection of purer ages was a mere abstraction, related to man or the world only as the creator of the gods, who were emanations from Him-

[1] Dillmann's *Genesis*, p. 7.

self.[1] To the initiated these might be but names of different manifestations of the One Supreme; but to the multitude they formed an endless crowd of divinities. On the Nile, as in Western Asia, the sun, under various titles, was the object of the highest veneration; but by a singular perversion of the religious sense, many of the lower animals were also worshipped as incarnations of the gods. In ancient times these heavenly beings had dwelt among men in the persons of the god-kings, but they had ceased to do so when man had been provided with laws and rules by which to guide himself. From that time, they had veiled themselves in the bodies of animals, to watch the course of the world without taking part in it. The cat, the crocodile, and the serpent were sacred forms into which they transfused, as it were, part of their divinity. The jackal, the ibis, the ape, and the scarabæus beetle were adored over all the country. The sparrow-hawk, the hippopotamus, and even the serpent, were locally divine. The sacred oxen of On and Memphis were especially famous. Grovelling homage was paid to these strange divinities. They were fed in costly temples; had numerous and splendid priesthoods; had festivals and high days; were mourned by whole districts, and in some cases by all Egypt, at their death, and were then embalmed and had public funerals. To show disrespect to one was a serious crime; to injure or kill one was punishable with death. No wonder that Juvenal, more than fifteen hundred years after Moses, ridicules a superstition so gross and repulsive.

"Who knows not," he asks, "what kind of omens the mad Egyptian worships? One district adores a crocodile, another grows pale before an ibis glutted with snakes.

[1] *Book of the Dead*, quoted in Maspero's *Histoire Ancienne*, p. 28.

The golden image of the sacred ape shines afar. . . . Here whole towns worship cats;[1] there, fishes of the Nile; yonder, a dog. . . . It is a crime to pull or eat a leek or an onion. O, holy nation, whose gods thus grow in gardens!"[2]

It is hard to carry ourselves back to the infancy of the world, and think aright of the childhood of the human mind. Motion and power being the signs and the results of life, men took for granted that all force, of whatever kind, must imply it. Hence the sun, the moon, and the stars, which they saw moving over the heavens, and whose appearances or absence were connected with the natural phenomena of the world, were fancied to be the intelligent and living causes of the return of spring, the heat and splendour of summer, the bounty of autumn, and the sterility of winter; of the alternation of day and night; the fall of the rains and dews; the rise of rivers, and the recurrence of storms or of sunny skies. But in his childish awe and ignorance, man could not limit his reverence to these distant and splendid objects. The mysterious force which swelled the bud or ripened the fruit; which poured out the running stream, or heaved up the waves of the ocean; the cloud above, and the wind that bore it along; the lofty mountains and the gloomy valley, were all alike more or less divine.[3] The simple fancies of savage tribes at the present day were then, in fact, the sober

[1] Emendation of Brotier. [2] Juvenal, Sat., xv. 1-11.

[3] "Have you read, as told by one of our most recent travellers, the story of the American Indian who set out to see the great cataract of Niagara? Already, when far off, the sublime sound made him fancy he heard the voice of the great Spirit. When he came nearer he fell down and prayed—not from slavish terror or dull stupidity, but from a feeling that the great Spirit must be near in a scene so wonderful and grand, and should be honoured in simple reverential prayer,—the best offering he had to make."—Herder's *Geist der Ebräischen Poesie*, vol. i. p. 47.

belief of all races. Whatever was beyond their simple comprehension was ascribed to an indwelling spirit. Even a great king like Xerxes, in the fifth century before Christ, regarded the seas or rivers he had to cross as living beings, whose favour he had to propitiate, or whose anger he, in his pride, would indignantly chastise. The Hellespont, daring to break down his bridge of boats, must be scourged like a rebellious slave, to cow it into subjection for the future.

No wonder, then, that antiquity had the most confused ideas of creation. With some, matter was eternal and all that is had resulted from the chance coming together of atoms: with others, as we have seen, the universe in all its parts was only a manifestation of the Divine, and thus was, in itself, the visible all-surrounding God: with still others, including, one may say, all mankind, except a few thoughtful minds, nature was simply a shining wonder, respecting the origin of which they never troubled themselves, though their imaginations peopled it with spiritual creations, above, beneath, around, the varied embodiments of their simple fancies in explanation of its exhaustless phenomena. Outside the Bible, the knowledge of God had perished from among men.

To all the vague and dreamy fancies respecting the Divine Being and the world, prevalent in antiquity, the narrative of Genesis opposes a simple but sublime revelation, which bears on its forehead the seal of the Living God. In language, the simplicity of which befits the remote antiquity in which it was uttered, it declares the absolute and eternal distinction between the creation and the Creator; between the creature and Him who formed it. The heavens and the earth are not God, for He made

them; neither the sun, nor the moon, nor the stars are God, nor are the seas or the countless wonders, animate or inanimate, which they contain, for He has spoken them all, alike, into being. The origin of the universe had been ascribed to Chance or Fate, but Genesis, in the place of such unmeaning expressions, reveals a Living, Personal, and Only God. Matter had been supposed to be eternal, but its creation is affirmed in the first words of the narrative: "In the beginning God created[1] the heavens and the earth;" not formed or fashioned them from previously

[1] "Bara." Of this word Gesenius, in his *Thesaurus*, p. 357b, says: "The use of this verb in Kal (the conjugation here employed) is entirely different from its primary signification (to cut, to shape, to fashion), and is used rather of the new production of a thing, than of the shaping or elaboration of existing material. That the first verse of Genesis teaches that the original creation of the world in its rude and chaotic state was from nothing, while in the remaining part of the chapter the elaboration and distribution of the matter thus created is taught, the connection of the whole section shows sufficiently clearly." Mühlau and Volck, in the new edition of *Gesenius' Handwörterbuch*, say: "Bara is used only of Divine creation, and *never with an accusative of the material*." Dillmann says: "The Hebrews use only the conjugation Piel (intensative) in speaking of human 'forming' or 'shaping,' while, on the other hand, they use only Kal in speaking of creation by God." "There is thus," says Ewald, "a designed and sharply marked distinction of the laborious and artificial 'forming' by man, and the easy, spontaneous creation of anything by God. An accusative of the material is never found with it (Kal) as with other words of forming or making." Delitzsch says (*Genesis*, p. 91): "The word Bara, in its etymology, does not exclude a previous material. It has, as the use of Piel shows, the fundamental idea of cutting or hewing. But as in other languages words which define creation by God have the same etymological idea at their root, so Bara has acquired the idiomatic meaning of a divine creating, which, whether in the kingdom of nature, or of history, or of the spirit, calls into being that which hitherto had no existence. Bara never appears as the word for human creations, differing in this from the synonyms 'asah,' 'yatzar,' 'yalad,' which are used both of men and of God: it is never used with an accusative of the material, and even from this it follows that it defines the divine creative act as one without any limitations, and its result, as to its proper material, as entirely new; and as to its first cause, entirely the creation of divine power." See also Umbreit, in *Studien und Kritiken*, 1866, p. 706. Kalisch, *Genesis*, vol. i. p. 1, says: "God called the universe into being out of nothing: not out of formless matter coeval in existence with Himself." Pagninus (Thesaurus) has the same definition: "Bara," he says, "is a word appropriate only to God, as the Creator out of nothing."

Staib, in *Studien und Kritiken*, 1852, p. 825, uses it as equivalent to calling into being what was not before. The words, "host of them," chap. ii. 1, includes all the inhabitants of the earth, the creatures and even the plants.

existing materials. We have not, therefore, to do with a mere incomprehensible abstraction which clouds our comprehension, but with a Living Being, infinite in His power, indeed, but bodied forth by the attributes of Personality, so that we can intelligently worship Him.

Yet Personality, merely in the sense of self-consciousness and will, would not constitute a Being fitted to attract, if unaccompanied with the attributes of a distinctively moral nature. Mere power might awe and crush us, but it could not command our love, or the consent of our moral nature to its requirements. But the conception of God revealed in Genesis adds, forthwith, all the special characteristics which attract the reverence and constrain the heart. It is not enough for a true personality that there be self-consciousness, for one might conceive, as the poets do, of the clouds or the mountains as self-conscious. Nor is the addition of will alone, enough, for even the lower creatures have both self-consciousness, and a power of choice and purpose. A moral character is wanted to complete a personality of the highest type, and this also we find in the Mosaic revelation of God. The creation of the heavens and the earth, and each utterance of an Almighty fiat, imply self-consciousness and will; but there is, besides, throughout the whole narrative, the still grander disclosure of a moral character, in the Divine approval of all things made, as "good;" in the beneficence which provides for the wants and happiness of all living things, and, above all, in the requirements, from mankind, of obedience to a sovereign standard of right, in the will of a Holy and Benevolent Creator.

The God of Genesis thus stands in the strongest contrast

with all conceptions of the Divine Being attained by unaided reason. He is not only all-powerful and all-wise, but He is the God of love. While the Creator of all, He is, Himself, the Uncreated, and as such Unchangeable. He is subject to no control of blind Fate or Necessity, but absolutely sovereign: confined to no limits of space, but present through all His works as a watchful Providence. Thus, in the very opening of Scripture, the conception given us of the Divine Being commands our worship as the highest Ideal. No loftier or purer can ever challenge our homage, for it is instinctively felt to be perfect. There is no attempt, as in the religious books or legends of other races, to tell the origin of the Godhead. His existence is assumed as a first truth. The Egyptian theology, amidst which Moses and his people lived, told how Osiris, the sun, brought forth the seven great planetary gods, and then the twelve humbler gods of the signs of the zodiac; and how they, in turn, produced the twenty-eight gods presiding over the stations of the moon, the seventy-two divine companions of the sun, and other deities. Indian theology spoke of Space bringing forth first water, then placing in it a germ which, after a time, became a great egg, shining with golden splendour, and in the end bringing forth Brahma, the father of all creatures. The Greek poets transferred to the gods the whole body of human passions, evil as well as good. The races of Western Asia laboriously stamped on their clay tablets and cylinders the legends of their countless greater and lesser gods. But no such characteristics deface the sublimity of Scripture. From the midst of a universal corruption of religion, its solitary but heavenly voice is heard, in the stillness of the very morning of time, proclaiming a God who had existed from

all eternity—"before the mountains were brought forth, and before the earth and the world were formed"—a God creating all things by the word of His power, and at the same time One to whom man could lift his eyes and direct his prayers; in the contemplation of whom he might animate his hopes and forget his sorrows; in whose holy perfections he could feel that he enjoyed the sympathy and love of an All-gracious as well as Almighty Father.

Thus the Hebrew race show themselves, even in their earliest records, as in a very true sense "the people of God," and such they have continued to be, more or less, in all ages since. As the sacred writings open by proclaiming Him, so the Jew, in all subsequent generations continued to be His witness till, from the household of Abraham, faith in the One Living and True God has spread through Judaism, Christianity, and Mahometanism, well nigh over the earth.

The explanation of such a unique fact has been variously sought. Renan ascribes it to a fancied devotion of the Semitic nations to the monotheistic idea.[1] But Max Müller, a scholar biased by no theological leanings, has shown the baselessness of this theory. "Can it be said," he asks, "that a monotheistic instinct could have been implanted in all those nations which adored Elohim, Jehovah Sabaoth, Moloch, Nisroch, Rimmon, Nebo, Dagon, Ashtaroth, Baal or Bel, Baal-peor, Beelzebub, Chemosh, Milcom, Adrammelech, Annamelech, Nibbaz and Tartak, Ashima, Nergal, Succoth-benoth, the sun, the moon, the planets, and all the host of heaven?"[2] Yet all these divinities were worshipped by Semitic peoples.

[1] Renan: *Histoire Générale des Langues Sémitiques*, p. 5.
[2] Max Müller: *Chips from a German Workshop*, vol. i. p. 345.

"Nor is it possible to explain on merely historical grounds how the Hebrews first obtained and so persistently clung to this grand first truth. Their chronicles show continual lapses into idolatry, and yet they always recovered themselves; till, at last, after a bitter discipline of national calamities they finally turned with enthusiastic devotion to the worship of Jehovah.

"Reference to a primitive religious instinct in mankind is as little satisfactory; for though there must have been such an intuitive sentiment in the earliest men as the basis of their future idolatries, it could only have impressed on them the existence of some Divine Being, but in no degree involved the conception of that Being as one and one only; but, indeed, as all history proves, tended to the very opposite. Nor can it be said that the Hebrew worked out the great truth by a profound philosophy, for no contrast could be greater between the Jewish mind and that of other nations of antiquity sprung from a different stock, than the utter absence from it of the metaphysical speculations in which other races delighted.

"Yet, while all nations over the earth have developed a religious tendency which acknowledged a higher than human power in the universe, Israel is the only one which has risen to the grandeur of conceiving this power as the One, Only, living God." No wonder that he concludes, "If we are asked how it was that Abraham possessed not only the primitive conception of the Divinity as He had revealed Himself to all mankind, but passed, through the denial of all other gods, to the knowledge of the One God, we are content to answer that it was by a special *divine revelation*."[1]

God, like the sun, can be seen only by His own light. The first chapter of Genesis, in itself, stamps the canon which it opens with the seal of inspiration.

[1] Max Müller, *Chips, etc.*, vol. i. p. 372.

CHAPTER III.

ANCIENT LEGENDS OF CREATION.

THE question has often been raised, Whence came the materials from which the Scripture account of creation was composed? Were they direct communications from God, or are they, as some have fancied, a series of visions, or were there pre-existing documents or traditions, of which use was made, the true and pure being winnowed, by Divine inspiration, from the errors and debasements by which they had become corrupted?

The theory of direct Divine communications by a series of visions granted to Moses, has been finally made untenable, by the decipherment of the tablets and cylinders brought from the long-buried palaces and public buildings of Assyria.

From these it is found that the races of Western Asia, which embraced shoots of the Aryan, Turanian, and Semitic stocks,[1] had traditions of the creation and of the great early events in the history of the world, which had come down to them from prehistoric ages. Whence they

[1] "The Aryan Race" is the name given to the stock from which the Hindus were an eastern offshoot, and the Celtic, Italian, Greek, and German peoples a western branch.

The Turanian languages are so called from "Turan," the Persian name for the countries north of Persia. They embrace the northern division, which includes Mongol, Turkish, Hungarian, and other Asiatic languages, and the southern, which is illustrated by the Tamul of India, the Malay, and the Polynesian.

The Semitic languages include the Chaldee and Syriac, the Arabic and Ethiopic, the Hebrew, Phœnician, and other dialects of ancient Palestine.

were derived at first, it is impossible to conjecture, though the fact that the tradition of the origin of the world accords so closely with the narrative of Genesis seems to show that it must have been an echo from primitive revelation, perhaps in the garden of Eden. The glow of these earliest days lingered in the sky long after their sun had set. That such distant memories should have reached Moses is easily understood, when we recollect that Abraham, the father of the Hebrew race, came from their very home in Mesopotamia; that his grandson Jacob returned thither, and that the writing and literature of Assyria and Babylonia were current everywhere in Western Asia, including Palestine, at least till the time of the Hebrew conquest; the Egyptian kings for generations receiving from their officials in Canaan, then a province of Egypt, constant communications in the wedge-shaped characters of Mesopotamia.

The plains of the Lower Euphrates had long been the seat of an ancient people when the forefathers of Abraham wandered towards them, apparently from the south. Known to us as Accadians, and doubtless connected with the Accad mentioned in Genesis,[1] they had a literature and high civilization peculiar to themselves. Assyrian tablets and cylinders have thrown a strangely full light over this early nation. Their language was related to the Turanian or Turco-Tatar stem, and seems to indicate that the races themselves had some connection. Columns of Accadian are found accompanied, side by side, by Assyrian words to explain them, as already obsolete; but inscriptions and documents in Accadian alone have also come down to us.

To this long-vanished people was due the invention of

[1] Gen. x. 10.

the strange arrow-headed writing of Babylonia, which was at first a system of pictures or hieroglyphics, but gradually developed itself into syllables, though without entirely losing its primitive characteristics. At the time of Abraham, —Ur of the Chaldees; Larsam, the modern Senkereh; Arku, the modern Warku, and the Erech of the Bible; and Babilu, the Scripture Babel, or Babylon, had already, for an unknown period, been centres of government, religious worship, and general culture. Sargon, a king of Accad, the earliest capital of Babylonia, is known to have reigned 3,750 years before Christ, and another king of Babylonia is named in the inscriptions of Assurbanipal, as having reigned 1,635 years before that monarch's conquest of Shushan,[1] that is, about 2,280 years before Christ.

So strangely remote was the rise of this civilization, that all the great temple-structures of Babylonia seem to have been founded by kings who reigned earlier than the sixteenth century before Christ. Bricks and clay tablets, with their names, and short inscriptions respecting them, have been found in the ruins of their constructions, the vast size of which shows the great power they wielded; those recovered from Telloh, in Southern Babylonia, carrying us back even so far as beyond 4,000 years before our Lord. Nor were the Accadians famous only for architecture. They had already distinguished themselves when we first meet them by careful astronomical observations and calculations; they had a carefully graded system of weights and measures; a money system skilfully settled, and a literature of which copious remains are now found

[1] *Records of the Past*, vol. iii. p. 8. Schrader (art. "Babylonien," in Riehm's *Handwörterbuch*), says 1,635 before Sennacherib, which would raise the date to about B.C. 2400.

in European museums, embracing works on geography, astrology, mythology, grammar, and mathematics; an elaborate epic poem; psalms or hymns to the gods, curious legends of gods and heroes, and much besides.

Nor were the civil or social affairs of these primeval communities in less full development. Tablets recording laws, royal commands, and government despatches, are intermixed with bills of merchants, deeds of sale or loan, and bankers' transactions and receipts, while thousands of beautifully engraved seals of extreme antiquity still attest the progress made in one at least of the arts in these early ages.

On this busy scene a new people after a while appeared, wandering apparently from Arabia to the south of Babylonia, and settling, first, in and round Ur, the present Mugheir, in the delta of the Euphrates. This was the race from a branch of which Abraham was, hereafter, to spring, for they were of Semitic stock. Steadily fighting their way north, they slowly mastered the Accadians and became their rulers; but the conquerors, like the Romans by the Greeks in after ages, were ere long in turn subdued, in a higher sense, by the culture of the regions they had won. Already in the thirty-eighth century before Christ, Sargon, already mentioned, a Semitic king,[1] after taking Erech, the present Warka, had the old holy books of the Accadians copied and also translated into Semitic—those books, later transcripts of which compose the literary treasures of Assyria which we now prize so highly.[2]

Traces of primitive revelation seem still to have lingered

[1] Semitic is the name given to the races speaking a language allied to the Hebrew and Arabic.

[2] Schrader, art. "Babylonien," in Riehm's *Handwörterbuch*. Maspero's *Histoire Ancienne*, pp. 149, 152–166.

in the populations to which the Semitic element was thus now added. The name of Babylon, or rather Babel, itself means the gate of El, and El,[1] as we know, is the early Hebrew name for God. In the days of Abraham a knowledge of Him still survived even as far off as Palestine, for we find Melchizedek addressed by the patriarch, and spoken of in the inspired narrative, as a priest of "the most High God, the Maker[2] of heaven and earth;" and the king of the Canaanitish town Gerar is also described as familiar with His name.[3] Yet, far and near, this last reminiscence of Paradise was more or less corrupted by idolatrous additions. The Accadians had received from past ages, accounts of creation, of the Deluge, and of other great events, disfigured either before they reached Babylonia, or in subsequent times, by heathen corruptions; and these, as we have seen, had spread over all Western Asia, so that the Hebrews must have been very early familiar with them.

In these primeval traditions, handed down to our time by the revelations of the Nineveh mounds, we find coincidences with the narratives in Genesis and variations from them, which indicate earlier sources common to both. How these treasured recollections from remote prehistoric ages had been preserved, is only conjecture, but when we remember that even before Sargon's day, writing was known in Babylonia, they may have been passed on through many generations even in this permanent form, before the earliest notices we have of their existence.

[1] So in the Assyrian inscriptions, but the sense of "confusion" (Gen. xi. 9) is also justified by the Syriac and Arabic.

[2] "Possessor" in the authorized version should be translated "Maker." Gen. xiv. 18–20.

[3] Gen. xx. 4.

The version recovered from Assyria seems, however, to belong to a comparatively late period, for it no longer exhibits the universe under the old Accadian spirits of the elements, but as ruled by the great gods of the Semitic race. Under these, the shadowy forms of the old belief come and go as the offspring of the material heavens and earth, and of the watery abyss of Chaos, which is personified by a great evil spirit, though recognized by the philosophers of those dim ages as, rather, the Mother and source of all things. An earlier series of legends was in existence on the Euphrates, different from this one in many respects, as is seen in some fragments happily recovered from the mounds of the ancient city of Cutha. It knows nothing of a creation in successive acts, and speaks of Chaos as the time when writing was as yet unknown. The earth already exists and is inhabited by a race who live in an underground city, and are destroyed by the god of Pestilence. This set of legends seems to date, in its present form, as far back as nearly three thousand years before Christ, while the Nineveh legends appear to show signs that their present form dates from about the eighth century before our era. Yet from what remote ages must both the Cuthean and Nineveh legends have come down to us, for even the latest transcription embodies the traditions of an immemorial past!

A few extracts from the Nineveh legends, as much the more perfect, will help to show their relation to the opening of Genesis. Of the first tablet only the commencement has been recovered: the second and third are virtually lost, but nearly the whole of the fourth has been discovered on a tablet brought from Babylonia. Two-thirds of the fifth have, also, been recovered, but we have no remains of the sixth and only small fragments of the seventh,

which completed the series. How wonderful, however, that even so much of these books of baked clay should have survived from about the time of Hezekiah of Judah, at latest, to our own day!

The opening of the first tablet, which was a short one, is as follows:

When the upper region was not yet called Heaven,
And the lower region was not yet called Earth,
Then, the first-born Deep was their parent:
The Chaos of waters gave birth to them all.
And the waters were embosomed in one (ocean waste).
The corn field was unharvested, the pasture was ungrown;
None of the gods had yet been born.
Their names were not spoken: they had (as yet fixed) no destiny (of any one).
Then the great gods were created.
Lakhmu and Lakhamu were born (first)
And grew up . . .
Then, Ansar and Kisar were born.
Long were the days, long the time till the gods Anu, (Bel, and Ea) were born:
Ansar and Kisar (gave them birth).

The rest of the tablet is lost.

The fifth tablet runs thus:

He prepared the dwellings of the great gods;
He fixed the stars: even the twin stars, to correspond with them
He made the year, appointing the signs of the Zodiac[1] over it.
Twelve months he established, with their stars, three for each,
From the day when the year issues forth, to its close.
He made the dwelling of the Sun-god, the god of the Ferry-boat,[2]
That they (the Stars) might not err, that they might not go astray,
That they might know their bounds:
He established, moreover, the dwelling of Bel and Ea, along with himself.

[1] The word is Mizrata: virtually the same word as Mazzaroth, Job xxxviii. 32.
[2] The ship of heaven.

He opened the great gates on each side,
He made strong the bolts on the left hand and on the right.
In the midst of it he made a staircase.
The moon he lighted up to be the watchman of the night
And to wander through the night, till the dawn of day.
(Saying) "Month by month, without fail, keep watch in thy disk.
"In the beginning of the month light up the night,
"Shooting forth thy horns, that the heaven may know.
"On the seventh day (filling thy) disk, thou shalt open wider its (hitherto) narrow sickle.
"At that time the sun will be on the horizon of heaven at thy (rising)
"Thou shalt cut off its . . .

Six more lines are on the tablet, but, unfortunately, they are so broken as to be nearly untranslatable.

The idea of the Bible account of Creation having been taken from such sources as these needs no refutation, for the contrast between them and it is at once apparent. Points of resemblance, however, show that both had a common origin, though the Chaldean story had sunk almost to the level of ordinary heathen legends. The first fragment corresponds in its subject to the first two verses of the first chapter of Genesis: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." In both accounts the present order of things rose from a watery chaos—the Tehōm of the Scriptures, the Tiamat of the legend—the same word being thus used in both narratives for the primeval condition of the world. But here the resemblance ends. In the legend the world is supposed to be created from pre-existent matter, not, as in Scripture, out of nothing. While the first words of Genesis proclaim the One Living God as the Creator of all things, but Himself uncreated, the legend has no higher

conception than that "none of the gods had yet been born," and that the "great gods," Lakhmu and Lakhamu, male and female, were born and grew up," to be followed after a time by numerous lesser deities, their offspring. It has no higher thought of the Divine nature than to transfer to it the differences of sexes, and people heaven with male and female gods. Tantu, the sea, and Absu, the abyss, beget Mummu, that is, Chaos. This again brings forth Lakhmu and Lakhamu, the male and female principles of force and growth: from Lakhmu springs Kissar, the lower expanse; from Lakhamu, Assur or Sar, the upper expanse; and from these again come Anu, the heaven, Anatu, the earth, Elu or Bel, and Beltis, while the earth and the heaven produce the planets, from whom again spring the lower gods.[1]

Thus the whole is only the deification of the different parts of nature in an ever increasing number.

The second fragment is a parallel to the fourth day of creation: "And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years: and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so. And God made two great lights: the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: He made the stars also. And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth, and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that it was good. And the evening and the morning were the fourth day."

The first tablet thus corresponded to the first and second

[1] Smith's *Chaldean Genesis*, p. 60.

verses of Genesis, and the fifth to the fourth day. A fragment of the seventh tablet speaks of the creation of the lower animals :

At that time the gods in their assembly created (the beasts)
They made perfect the mighty (monsters)
They caused the living creatures of the field to come forth,
The cattle of the field (the wild beasts of the field, and the creeping things)
They fixed their habitations for these living creatures
They distributed (in their dwelling places) the cattle and the creeping things,
They made strong the multitude of creeping things ; even all the offspring of the earth.
In the Assembly of my family (that of the God Assur—the Heaven—)
And the god Ea, the lord of the noble face,
The multitude of creeping things did I make strong
. . . The seal of Lakhamu did I destroy.

This fragment corresponds to the sixth day of creation : "And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind : and it was so. And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind : and God saw that it was good."

The legend, it will be seen, resembled the Scripture narrative in the division of creation into seven successive acts, though no mention is made of seven days. In both, a watery chaos existed before the world was formed, and in both the light appears first ; then the firmament is created, and, after that, the celestial bodies are appointed to be for signs and for seasons, for days and for years. Next comes the creation of the beasts and creeping things. Yet there are important differences between the two accounts. In the Assyrian legend the earth seems not to have been made

till after the appointment of the heavenly bodies, and the seventh day is one of work, not of rest, while there is nothing corresponding to the words of Genesis, that "The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." Moreover, light is brought forth and the firmament is made, according to the Assyrian account, only after a great fight between Merodach and Tiamat — the power of evil: a curious parallel to the statement in the Apocalypse that "there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world."[1] An Assyrian bas-relief in the British Museum represents Tiamat, with whom Merodach fought, as a being with horns and claws and a tail and wings.

In the belief that the planets were living beings, the Chaldean account ascribes palaces to them, but as they might wander from their courses, the gods Bel and Ea were set to watch over them and keep them from such a misfortune. The tablets, moreover, with true primitive simplicity, speak of great gates fixed on the left hand and the right, through which, perhaps, the luminaries are to pass at rising and setting.

The specially great distinguishing feature between Genesis and the Nineveh legend is found, however, in the religious ideas which separate the two by an impassable gulf. In the one we have many gods, the other knows only the One God, Maker of all things. Truth thus marks Genesis, and wild invention the Assyrian epic.

The resemblances and the variations in the legends and

[1] Rev. xii. 7–9.

the Bible speak for themselves, leaving the immeasurable superiority of the latter beyond any comparison. The Chaldean account has, at most, only here and there some traces of the grand simplicity which characterizes that of Scripture throughout. At the best, it glows only with a darkened light—

> ". . . As when the sun new risen
> Looks through the horizontal misty air,
> Shorn of his beams "—

while the Bible story is like the light of a morning without clouds. In each, the brightness must needs have come from the same fountain ; but in the one it shines clear ; in the other, it struggles through mists and clouds.

One important bearing of these old legends must not, however, be overlooked. It is a recognized peculiarity of the early chapters of Genesis, that they consist of separate and independent documents, marked by the use of the name Elohim for God, in the one, and Jehovah in the other. The first chapter and the first three verses of chapter ii. are attributed to the "Elohist;" the rest of chapter ii. and also chapter iii. are ascribed to the "Jehovist," and are held to be a second account of creation. But other Assyrian tablets contain not only the "Elohist's" account of the six days, but also that of the fall of man, by the "Jehovist." The story of Genesis thus existed from the earliest ages, in its completeness, both as a whole and in detail, and even in the order of its incidents.

CHAPTER IV.

THE BIBLE AND MODERN SCIENCE.

THE zeal to defend the Word of God from all hostile attacks is a noble one, but the history of the past is a continuous lesson of the supreme importance that it be a zeal according to knowledge. Every great discovery in science has, in turn, been viewed with suspicion by worthy but mistaken theologians, and every error in physical science, now exploded, has been vindicated by what was held at the time to be the voice of Scripture. Augustine denounced the idea of there being "antipodes," or men on the opposite side of the earth, with their feet opposite our feet, as "on no account to be believed," since it would contradict Scripture.[1] The roundness of the earth was thought to be satisfactorily disproved by the text which speaks of the heaven being stretched out like a curtain.[2] Galileo was forced to sign a statement that "the proposition that the sun is the centre of the universe and immovable from its place, is absurd, philosophically false, and formally heretical, because it is expressly contrary to Scripture," and that "the proposition that the earth is not the centre of the universe, nor immovable, but that it moves, and also with a diurnal motion, is absurd, philosophically false, and at least erroneous in faith." Did not the Bible say that the world was established that it *cannot be moved*?[3] Even so

[1] Aug., *De Civitate Dei*, lib. xvi. c. ix. [2] Ps. civ. 2. [3] Ps. xciii. 1.

acute a mind as that of Calvin urged that this text proved conclusively that the earth is at rest in the heavens, and that the sun moves round it.[1] Nor were other passages apparently less decided. Was it not written, "God laid the foundations of the earth, that it *should not be removed for ever.*" "*The earth abideth for ever.*" Was it not clearly taught that the sun moved, not the earth, by such language as, "In them hath He set a tabernacle for the sun, which is as a bridegroom *coming out of* his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man *to run a race.* His *going forth* is from the end of the heaven, and his *circuit* unto the ends of it." "The sun also *ariseth*, and the sun *goeth down*, and *hasteth* to his place where he *arose.*"[2] Columbus was assailed with quotations from the book of Genesis, the Psalms of David, the Prophets, the Epistles, and the Gospels, to prove the impiety of his belief in the existence of America.

The mistake in such cases was that men went with their preconceived ideas to the Bible, and interpreted it so as to support them. Instead of taking the only safe course in reference to the phenomena of nature, of drawing their conclusions from the patient and wide observation of facts, they accepted their hereditary notions as infallibly right, and read Scripture by their light.

Nothing can be more certain than that the truths proclaimed, on sufficient evidence, in nature, are, in their sphere, as much a revelation of the ways of God, as the higher disclosures of the Bible. The records of the marble tablets of the hills are traced by the finger of the Almighty as truly as were the characters on the tables of Sinai. To

[1] Calvin, *On the Psalms*, on Ps. xciii. 1.

[2] Ps. civ. 5. Eccles. i. 4. Ps. xix. 4-6. Eccles. i. 5.

reject the witness of the skies or earth, is no less to refuse "Him that speaks from heaven" than if we turned away from the revelations of His written Word. Nor is it to be forgotten that a truth of natural science, sufficiently established, is henceforth beyond controversy, and cannot be impugned by any supposed meaning we may attach to particular texts. The sun, for example, is virtually at rest, and the earth moves, notwithstanding any array of verses our ancestors brought to disprove it.

It is of supreme importance, moreover, that we demand no more from Scripture than God intended it to yield. It was given to reveal Him to us and to make known His laws and will for our spiritual guidance, but not to teach us lessons in natural science. To expect them is to anticipate disappointment.

A little consideration will, in fact, make it evident that the sacred books could only express themselves according to natural appearances, and not in scientific terms, if they were to be understood in any age by the mass of men. We know, even now, only a very few of the secrets of nature, and habitually use language based on the unscientific teaching of the senses. The ends of the earth—the rising and the setting of the sun—the overarching skies—are still familiar expressions, but are, of course, incorrect. If forced to lay them aside, it would be hard to replace them by intelligible phrases which would be scientifically blameless. But, fifteen centuries before Christ—that is, when Moses lived—the language of natural appearances must have been universal, for science was as yet unborn. To use it, was to employ what alone was then understood, and, indeed, no other mode of expressing physical truth would even now suit the mass of mankind.

Nor would it have been enough had the sacred writers used scientific language suited to the present day. If they employed such language at all, they must have done so with an exactness which would anticipate the discoveries of the remotest future, and thus, to the end of time, some texts would have seemed as incorrect, from our ignorance, as others, written according to natural appearances, are now foolishly said to be, from our partial scientific attainments.

It is not the object of Scripture, moreover, to reveal what we may ourselves discover, and it would have permanently enfeebled the mind of the race if the stimulus of research had been rendered unnecessary. Besides, we can neither receive nor utilize natural knowledge, without a previous development and training of the faculties, only possible by the phenomena of nature being left for our own investigation. Great discoveries can be recognized as such only if the time be ripe for them, nor is any decisive step in intellectual advance more than the mere completion of a progress stretching through all the past. What any age does or thinks is only the development of all that has been done and thought from the beginning. The connection of the sciences involves an advance in all, to make use of a further advance in any. How many links must there have been in the chain that led ultimately to the discovery of the true motions of the heavens? Egypt, Chaldea, Greece, Rome, and the Middle Ages had all contributed, whether by their errors or discoveries, to the conclusions on which Copernicus based the theory ultimately proved to be the true one. We cannot force unnaturally the education of mankind any more than that of an individual mind. Antiquity abounds with approaches to great discoveries which, after all, were not made, because the world was not

ripe for them. Printing was nearly discovered in Babylonia, where the habit of stamping clay tablets seemed inevitably to suggest it. There is a Roman ring in the British Museum with a device and some initials, engraved for stamping with ink an attestation to documents. But the mind of the race had not yet become fit to go farther, and it was left to the awakened activity of a later age to see the supreme importance of such hints. It would, therefore, have been worse than useless for the Bible to have anticipated scientific results which required an indefinite future to make them intelligible.

It must, then, be an error to look for exactness of scientific statement in the Scriptures. They were given for a specific purpose and for that only, and in other matters use only the simple language of the senses, which all ages from the earliest to the latest can understand.

Hence, while all are agreed in the testimony which Genesis bears to such leading truths as the self-existence of God, His unity, personality, and goodness, the creation of the world by Him, His absolute independence of it, and distinctness from it, the appearance of man as the latest production of the Almighty, and other matters, there has been the greatest difference in the explanations offered to harmonize the details of the sacred narrative with scientific facts.

On the first utterance of Scripture, indeed, that the earth, after its creation, lay in a state of chaos for unknown ages before order began to appear, there is a unanimity of assent, not only from the friends but from the critics of revelation.[1]

[1] In the religion of Zoroaster (Zarathroustra) the universe and man are created by Ahouramazdu, the good and great god, in six successive periods, forming in all a year of 365 days. Man was created last, without stain. Lenormant, *Les Origines de l'Histoire*, p. 52.

The meaning of the "days" of the Mosaic account has been the subject of frequent argument, some thinking them periods of twenty-four hours, others lengthening them to ages. Which opinion is correct is a matter of individual judgment, but men equally orthodox have held both. The idea that they mean natural days, of twenty-four hours, appears, however, to have been virtually abandoned; lengthened periods, capable of allowing time for all the geological changes disclosed by science, being felt essential to any possible reconciliation of nature with revelation. But even with this concession, we must not expect a minute parallel between the simple words of Genesis and the elaborate details of modern discovery. The most recent comparison of the two, by one who unites the highest scientific attainments with zealous loyalty to Scripture,[1] sums it up thus: The "general character" of the narrative in Genesis, we are told, accords "in its broad outlines," "in many instances, very remarkably with what we learn from scientific investigation." Among these are the statement of the earth having been created, and not existing from eternity: the fact that geology shows "that there has been a gradual, or sometimes apparently more or less abrupt change in the surface of our earth, so that its state has, on the whole, been one of progress, which is in full accordance with the description of Genesis. Geology, moreover, shows that, as regards animals and vegetables, new races appeared from time to time, which cannot be traced by continuous descent from what preceded them. Now, if we accept the first chapter of Genesis as an account, in very general terms, of the method of creation, we notice that it is not described as done once for all, nor

[1] Sir George Stokes, President of the Royal Society.

yet again by a continuous process of development, but rather from time to time, the plants and animals so formed being endowed with the power of reproducing their own kind. Further, in the order of production of living things, whether plants or animals, there are some remarkable accordances with what we learn from geology. The earliest strata that show living remains exhibit those of marine creatures, land animals coming later. So we read first 'the waters brought forth abundantly,' and only later do we read of beasts, and before the beasts come the plants; land plants which are necessary for their sustenance. Finally, in placing man the last of all, the record fully accords with what we learn from geology, which places man in the latest group; and though it may be we have no evidence giving the relative order of appearance of man and certain beasts contemporaneous with him, yet we have no evidence whatsoever of any new form having come into existence subsequently to man."

It is clear from this abstract that it could not have been the design of God to give in the few opening lines of Genesis an exact scientific statement of the stages observed in creation. The sublime truth that nature was prepared step by step for the appearance of man, is the great lesson intended, and science corroborates it throughout. There has been, undoubtedly, from the beginning, a steady advance from lower to higher forms of life and vegetation. It is found, indeed, that Cuvier's arrangement of the animal kingdom is that which the rocks exhibit.[1] Man is recog-

[1] Thus:
Geological arrangement—Radiata, Articulata, Mollusca, Fish, Reptiles, Birds, Mammals, Man.
Cuvier's arrangement—Radiata, Articulata, Mollusca, Fish, Reptiles, Birds, Mammals, Man.

nized by the highest authorities of modern science as beyond question the ideal being toward whose appearance "nature had been working from the earliest ages; a being, therefore, whose existence had been foreordained." These are Sir Richard Owen's words. Not less striking are those of Agassiz: "There is a manifold progress," says he, "in the succession of beings on the surface of the earth. This progress consists in an increasing similarity to the living fauna, and, among the vertebrates especially, in their increasing resemblance to man. *Man is the end* towards which all the animal creation has tended, from the first appearance of the earliest fishes."

Perhaps the most satisfactory of the many efforts towards a full harmony between the narrative of the six days in Genesis, and the disclosures of science, is that of the late Dr. McCaul. The first verse, he regards as an account of the original act of creation, which may have preceded the changes related in the rest of the chapter, by many millions of years. The existence of light before the appearance of the sun, rose, he tells us, from the masses of revolving cosmical vapour, the condensation of which, on the nebular theory, produced the world. It is not said, he adds, that the sun was created on the fourth day, but only that, with the moon and stars, it was then appointed to rule the day and night, and to measure time. The "days" are not to be measured by the sun, but by light and darkness, which God called day and night, and their length has not been revealed to us. They are, indeed, held to have been vast periods. The seventh day, like the other six, is an indefinite period, but the six creative periods cannot be identified with those of geology, "from the fact that of the work of two days of the Mosaic account

geology knows nothing, and astronomy nothing certain; namely, that of the first, on which the light was called forth; and of the fourth day, when the sun and the planetary system was perfected. Moses gives an outline of the history of creation, such as would be intelligible to those for whom he wrote, and suitable as an introduction to Divine revelation, and on both accounts necessarily limited in the matter and brief in the narration."

The summing up of the whole discussion is strikingly presented. "Moses relates how God created the heavens and the earth at an indefinitely remote period, before the earth was the habitation of man. Geology has lately discovered the existence of a long prehuman period. A comparison with other Scriptures shows that the 'heavens' of Moses include the abode of angels, and the place of the fixed stars, which existed before the earth. Astronomy points out remote worlds, whose light began its journey long before the existence of man. Moses declares that the earth was or became covered with water, and was desolate and empty. Geology has found by investigation that the primitive globe was covered with a uniform ocean, and that there was a long Azoic period, during which neither plant nor animal could live. Moses states that there was a time when the earth was not dependent on the sun for light or heat; when, therefore, there could be no climatic differences. Geology has lately verified this statement by finding tropical plants and animals scattered over all places of the earth. Moses affirms that the sun, as well as the moon, is only a light-holder. Astronomy declares that the sun is a non-luminous body, dependent for its light on a luminous atmosphere. Moses asserts that the earth existed before the sun was given as a luminary,

Modern science proposes a theory which explains how this was possible. Moses asserts that there is an expanse extending from earth to the distant heights, in which the heavenly bodies are placed. Recent discoveries lead to the supposition of some subtle fluid medium in which they move. Moses describes the process of creation as gradual, and mentions the order in which living things appeared, plants, fishes, fowls, land animals, man.[1] By the study of nature, geology had arrived independently at the same conclusion. Whence did Moses get all this knowledge? How was it that he worded his rapid sketch with such scientific accuracy? If he in his day possessed the knowledge which genius and science have attained only recently, that knowledge is superhuman. If he did not possess the knowledge, then his pen must have been guided by superhuman wisdom."[2]

Dr. McCaul represents one aspect of this interesting question, but other authorities, equally orthodox, frankly differ from his views. Thus, for example, the Bishop of Durham, Dr. Westcott, used frankly to tell the students at Cambridge that he regarded the first chapter of Genesis, not as a history, but, rather, as a hymn. The thoughtful judgment of a great luminary of science, who is also a truly religious man—Sir Richard Owen—old in years and honours, may fitly be added as the verdict of one supremely

[1] "Fowls" come after some forms of "land animals" in the story of the rocks: not, as Dr. McCaul says, before them.

[2] *Aids to Faith*, pp. 232–233.

It is curious to find Dean Colet, so long ago as the dawn of our English Reformation, in treating the narrative of creation in Genesis, show a freedom and independent judgment which seem to anticipate the most modern spirit of inquiry. It is well to notice this fact in connection with the great father of English Protestantism, that no one may think harshly of good men whose conclusions respecting this portion of the Mosaic writings may be different from one's own.

I may add, as an illustration of the slow growth of natural science, that Colet speaks of five elements: air, earth, fire, water, and ether. "Below the stars," says he, "are the inhabitants of fire and air."—Letters to Radulphus, p. 14.

able to look at the matter dispassionately and with the fullest knowledge of all its bearings. "It seems to me," says the magnificent veteran of science, "that religion and science are too utterly distinct to be ever reconcilable by the logical and scientific man. The progressive advance of both is such that each diverges rather than converges. And I do not quite know why this should not be without damage to either. I possess a very real and true recognition of Bible teaching and faith, and I recognize their great value for all the hope of human life; but at the same time I do not think that the Genesis of the Bible was intended to be a scientific history of creation—not for a moment can I think that, though I would never doubt the good faith of the writer. No, I cannot think that religion has in any way suffered. The known is very small compared with the knowable, and we may trust in the Author of all truth, who, I think, will not let that truth remain for ever hidden." Very earnest grew the strong, deep voice as he closed with these words: "Nothing of the highest Christianity has ever suffered, or will suffer."

The mysterious remoteness of the creation of the world must thus be kept carefully distinct from that of the creation of man. With the former Scripture has nothing to do; the latter is abundantly vindicated by the corroboration of advancing knowledge. Geology has conclusively proved that periods vast beyond imagination must have elapsed since the first stages of the history of our earth. The thickness of the solid crust of rocks, which hides the fiery secrets of the interior, has been variously estimated at from a few miles to six hundred, or even two thousand five hundred,[1] but the wide contrast in these estimates is, itself, enough to show how little reliance can be placed on

[1] The second is the view of Mr. Hopkins, the third that of Sir Wm. Thompson.

any of them. Yet it must have taken incalculable ages to bring about the cooling of so huge a mass even to this extent, for science leaves no question of our world having at first flamed through the heavens as a great ball of matter fluid from intense heat, the gradual loss of which permitted the crust to become solid. On this surface, shattered and roughened by the contraction of cooling, has, since then, been slowly heaped up the vast depth of rocks with which we are familiar as formed by the action of water; whether that of the ocean, which had at last found a bed in the hollows of the sorely riven world, or of the lakes or rivers. How inconceivable the time required to make things as we find them, must have been, may be realized in some measure when we remember that the water-formed rocks form, in the aggregate, a mass of about twenty-six miles in thickness. The rocks formed of cooled fiery matter need not trouble us, for they are either the fused and crystalline foundation of the water-born rocks, and as such their predecessors in the thick darkness of eternity, or they have been poured up from the fiery depths below, at varying periods during all the past, to the earliest dawn of time. But how long would it take to wear away the original crust of the earth, born of fire, and spread it out in sediment, over the bottom of the primeval waters? The roughness of the landscape, as I have said, must have characterized every age, for the shrinking of the mass of the world, as it cooled, must have caused a shrinking of its surface, by which it would be wrinkled, cracked, and shrivelled into wild and gigantic outlines, of what were hereafter to become the glorious variety of mountain, table-land, and valley, which now beautify our great dwelling place. But when we think that there are about twelve miles of the lowest family of rocks, every particle of which

had to be separated by the same almost imperceptible agencies of heat and cold, air and water, still at work over the face of the world, the unimaginable slowness with which so vast a series of beds must have been accumulated is forcibly brought to our thoughts. For everything shows that, except to a very small degree, in isolated spots, the same forces of nature, of no greater intensity than we see them possess, have, from the beginning, been the source of all geological change. The ripple on the most ancient sandstone marks as gentle an ebb and flow of the ocean then, as now, and the rain-drops that have left their little pits on the sand of the seashore so many millions of years ago, show that the phenomena of the clouds were the same then as they are to-day; the stillness of the atmosphere, or its tempests, the same as at present.

Nor were the slow sinkings and elevations of the mountain-deep beds of rock, thus sifted over the bottom of the shallow waters, fringing existing land, more hurried apparently than the subsidencies and elevations with which every coast-line makes us familiar to-day. The multitudinous organic remains in every stratified rock but the very oldest, or those changed in their composition by external heat, show the undisturbed continuance of life, animal and vegetable, from age to age, amidst conditions such as those of the animal and vegetable kingdoms around us.

Through what spaces of time, then, must the Almighty have been slowly working? But it has been the same, alike with the long succession of the rocks, and of the races they entomb. These, also, have flourished for their day, and then have given place to others. Each series of landscapes may have had a longer day than short-lived humanity, but Homer's fine comparison of the succession of the generations of men to the budding and fall of the leaves of

summer, is as true of the hills as of the fading race to whom they seem eternal.

Like as the generation of leaves, so also that of men ;
For the wind strews the leaves on the ground; but the forest,
Putting forth fresh buds, grows on, and spring will presently return.
Thus with the generation of men; the one blooms, the other fades away.[1]

It may be well, however, to aid the realization of what is implied by the expression of Genesis, "In the beginning," by a brief sketch of what is revealed of the history of one limited class of rocks, those to which we owe mineral fuel. Coal is formed of compressed and chemically altered plants, and is found in all water-made rocks, though in very different forms, but it is in the rocks known as the Carboniferous System that its chief deposits occur. The climate and soil during the ages embraced by this class of rocks were especially suited to the growth of plants required to provide the future fuel of mankind. Large regions over Europe and most of the globe were then covered with shallow waters, both salt and fresh, dotted with islands, and cut off from each other by stony ridges, which were to become mountain chains in later ages. Numerous rivers, moreover, flowed lazily through the flat landscapes, and silted up the lakes and lagoons with the wreck worn from older rocks. There was no difference of climate, such as now prevails, in any part of the world, but an equable temperature—like that, perhaps, of southern England in summer, but unlike it in its being the same all round the year—with an atmosphere laden with vapour, prevailed even in the Arctic regions. These wintry expanses had then, in the opinion of some, much the same climate as the Switzerland

[1] *Iliad*, vi. 146.

summer of our time, with no winter, so universal was the close, sultry warmth.

Most of the plants composing the coal measures have been obliterated, but those still recognizable all belong to the lower orders, though all reached a gigantic size, under circumstances so favourable. Gigantic club mosses and horse-tails and lofty tree-ferns, with other kindred forms, rose to a height of more than a hundred feet above the humid and steaming soil. Along with these a due proportion of humbler plants grew into deep beds, filling up lakes and morasses, age after age, till the slow sinking of the ground covered them with silt and mud. Coal beds, indeed, are simply forests and fens that have flourished near the water's edge, and have settled so imperceptibly, that the roots of the trees still remain in the soil as they grew, and even light seeds of plants have not been drifted away. They consist, however, of a great number of distinct beds, and some of great thickness; others, only thin layers, but all separated by deposits of silt, sand, and mud, showing that as each bed sank slowly under water, the subsidence stopped, repeatedly, for long periods, to begin again when a new bed was to be formed. Experiments have shewn that a seam of one yard in thickness must have required for its formation a mass of vegetable matter about nine yards in depth, so that to produce a single bed ten yards thick, which is within the limits of some English seams, the vegetation of all kinds which formed it must have been growing till it was nearly a hundred yards in solid depth. Then came the imperceptibly slow subsidence, and the deposit of earthy matter was spread over the whole.

But what length of time must have been needed for the absorption from the atmosphere of the vast accumulation of carbon needed to form so wonderful a mass of vegetation

as makes up the vast number of beds of coal found over the whole world! They are found through a body of rock from a mile and a half to two miles and a half in thickness; and we have, besides, the great deposits of lignite, or woody coal, and of peat; and the bituminous substances, as great in quantity, in the aggregate, as the coal beds, or even greater, permeating, as they do, whole mountain chains; and the asphalts and vast lakes of petroleum, which are the result of vegetable decomposition. Millions of years must have been needed to allow of the atmosphere yielding the amount of carbon thus absorbed, even granting that the proportion of carbonic acid gas in it was greater in these ages than it is now.

That things went on while these amazing deposits were being formed, just as they do now, is seen, not only in the presence of the roots of the tree-ferns where they grew, and of the light seeds of plants lying where they fell, but from all the phenomena of vegetation being similar to those of the vegetation of our own day, and also in the remains of animal life preserved in the coal beds, though these can represent only a very small part of the creatures then existing. In the higher beds we find spiders and large scorpions, land-snails, beetles, and, strange to say, cockroaches, of which there are found over eighty species, and insects of other kinds. The first known land-vertebrates, amphibious, salamander-like creatures, crawled about; the trilobite, fast waning to extinction, still frequented the sea bottoms, and other types somewhat allied to the lobster and the shrimp abounded. To the coal-measure rocks, moreover, we owe the first oysters, while there are mollusks, the forerunners of the beautiful ammonites, and fish, armoured outside like those of the earlier rocks, but with an approach to the reptile, which did not, however, appear in its true form

till the next family of rocks were being formed. Yet the ages on ages of the coal measures are only a day in the history of the world! Through all these vast periods, the successive subsidences and partial elevations required to create the material from which were formed the mineral treasures of these rocks—greater than those of all other systems put together—were slowly providing for the future comfort and wants of mankind. With so long a provision and care did the wisdom and love of God elaborate the great plan which has made our world what it is. There can, indeed, be no illustration more striking of the bounty and goodness of Providence than these rocks display. For they give us not only our stores of coal, but also our sandstones for building, our marbles for decoration, our metals for machinery and a thousand other uses; the oil which, under the name of petroleum, is the great illuminant for the poor in all lands; fat for the lapidary; the loveliest colours, the most delicate perfumes, and various drugs, all from coal-tar, and even sugar, three hundred times sweeter than that from the cane. The building up of the world may have taken untold millions of years, but the same Fatherly love presided over its development, from the first to the last.

Professor James Geikie, LL.D., has kindly favoured me with the subjoined abstract of the Geological Story of the World:

POST-TERTIARY, OR QUATERNARY.

POST-GLACIAL AND RECENT.—Vegetable and animal life much the same as at present: includes Neolithic, Bronze, and Iron periods of archæology.

PLEISTOCENE, OR GLACIAL.—Marked by great oscillations of climate. During cold epochs Arctic-alpine flora and northern forms of animal life lived in what are now temperate latitudes. When the climatic conditions were more genial southern and temperate forms of life—animals and plants—occupied the temperate latitudes. Reindeer, glutton, mammoth, Arctic fox, etc., formerly lived in Southern Europe. Hippopotamus, rhinoceros, elephant, etc., lived during genial interglacial times in England, North Germany, etc. Palæolithic man was contemporaneous with all these animals.

CAINOZOIC, OR TERTIARY.

PLIOCENE.—Very genial climate. Evergreen vegetation predominated over large part of low grounds of Europe: in the high grounds pines and deciduous trees were the prevalent forms. Great pachyderms of extinct or no longer indigenous forms: ancestral forms of wolf, hyena, bear, and other carnivores; together with such modern genera as dog, ox, goat, sheep, etc. Seas of temperate latitudes had a molluscan fauna recalling that of more southern seas. Climate becomes less genial toward close of period.

MIOCENE.—Climate at first tropical, but becomes subsequently less extreme. Tropical vegetation all over temperate regions: a luxuriant flora extending to within a few degrees of the pole in Greenland, etc. The walnut, plane, beech, oak, maple, ivy, and vine grew in Arctic regions. Many large pachyderms, carnivores, etc.—all of extinct forms. Apes also lived in Europe.

OLIGOCENE.—Tropical climate. Palm-trees and rich tropical vegetation all over Europe. Many herbivorous and carnivorous mammals of extinct types, some of which combine the characters of placental and marsupial mammals. Amongst European birds were an ancestral form of trogons, flamingoes, pelicans, secretary-birds, etc.

EOCENE.—Tropical climate with very abundant vegetation. Reptiles consist chiefly of forms belonging to the modern groups of turtles, terrapins, snakes, lizards, crocodiles, and alligators. None of the great saurians of Mesozoic times survived to this period. The mammals—all of extinct forms—were herbivorous and carnivorous, the latter very numerous. Tapir-like animals abounded. Many of the mammals had marsupial affinities. Lemuroid animals first appear.

MESOZOIC, OR SECONDARY.

CRETACEOUS.—Vegetation at first consists chiefly of ferns, cycads, and conifers. Later on appeared forests of ordinary leafy trees (the earliest of the great class of Dicotyledons), such as forms of maple, willow, oak, etc. Great land reptiles (30 feet or so in length); flying reptiles, and swimming reptiles (one 75 feet long) of many kinds. Birds with teeth. Amongst fishes were bony-scaled ganoids and representatives of the sharks and rays. True bony fishes make their first appearance. Sponge, sea-urchins, and chambered shells abounded.

JURASSIC (OÖLITIC). Vegetation consists mainly of ferns, horse-tails, conifers, and cycads. Corals abounded over much of the site of modern Europe. Sea-lilies common but not so plentiful as in earlier ages. Sea-urchins, chambered shells, and cuttle-fishes swarmed in the seas. Fishes also plentiful, chiefly small ganoids and forms of sharks and rays. The most striking feature of Jurassic life is the great development of reptiles. Rivers and lakes, the land, the sea, and the air teemed with them. Some of them are types entirely extinct (such as Ichthyosaurus, Plesiosaurus, Pterosaurus, Megalosaurus, etc.), others are precursors of modern forms. Among the gigantic Dinosaurs, which were land reptiles, were some of the largest forms of life that the world ever saw. The earliest known bird which was toothed comes from the Jurassic. The highest forms of life were small marsupials.

TRIASSIC.—Vegetation chiefly ferns, horse-tails, conifers, and cycads. The most notable forms of animal life were Labyrinthodonts, certain early types of lizards, the earliest known Dinosaurs, the first of the Plesiosaurs, the earliest representative of the crocodiles, and the first known mammal—a small marsupial.

PALÆOZOIC, OR PRIMARY.

PERMIAN.—Vegetation like that of the Carboniferous period; many of the most characteristic Palæozoic types of plant life died out towards the close of the Permian times. The most notable feature in the vegetation was the prevalence of conifers and the appearance of cycads. First appearance of lizard-like reptiles (*Proterosaurus*). Labyrinthodonts which date from an earlier period appear to have abounded.

CARBONIFEROUS.—Very abundant vegetation, the plants belonging chiefly to the flowerless division. Ferns, forms allied to club-mosses, and great horse-tails abounded, together with many large trees which have no modern representatives. Scorpions, myriapods, true insects, land-snails, and amphibians are all that is known of the land life of the period. The amphibians are represented by Labyrinthodonts—small and large—somewhat resembling in form the living salamander. The limestones of this system contain vast numbers of corals belonging to a type that is now all but extinct, sea-lilies, lamp-shells of endless variety, and coiled and straight chambered shells. Bony scaled fishes (ganoids), and large predaceous sharks were plentiful in the lagoons, rivers, and estuaries of the period.

DEVONIAN AND OLD RED SANDSTONE.—Mainly a flowerless vegetation—ferns, club-mosses, and horse-tails being the prevalent forms. Some conifers were present. Insects and land-snails are about all that is known of the terrestrial life. The lakes of the period teemed with fishes (ganoids), some of which were entirely covered with hard, enamelled bony scales, while in others the head, with more or less of the body, was protected by large bony plates. The life of the Devonian seas had a general resemblance to that of the preceding Silurian period.

CAMBRIAN. No traces of terrestrial plants; sea-weeds not uncommon. The marine life has a general resemblance to that of the Silurian—lamp-shells and trilobites being the most characteristic forms.

[The climatic conditions of the Palæozoic times appear to have been singularly equable all the world over. In Mesozoic times the world's climate still remained equable, but probably not to such a marked degree. The climate of the Cainozoic periods was likewise genial and very unlike the present, but the tropical conditions of early Cainozoic times gradually passed away during the later stages of the era. In Post-tertiary times supervened the extraordinary climate of the glacial period.]

AZOIC.

ARCHÆAN.—No indubitable traces of life of any kind. Eozoon is now believed by most Palæontologists to be an inorganic structure.

I am indebted to Clodd's *Story of Creation* for the notice of the Coal Formation in this chapter.

CHAPTER V.

JEWISH IDEAS OF NATURE AND OF CREATION.

It would be interesting and instructive if we could carry ourselves back to the simple age when Moses first told the story of the Creation to the multitudes of his people, lately slaves in Egypt, but now wandering in the desert spaces that hem round the Promised Land. What ideas could they have attached to the words which to us are so full of significance?

The humble Jew, so lately toiling in the brickfields of Rameses, must have been in all intellectual respects a child of nature. His ideas of the world around him and the sky over him could have been formed only from the impressions of the senses, uncorrected by the reasonings or the discoveries of science. He had heard in Egypt that the sun was the supreme god and that the other heavenly bodies were divine; that the Nile was no less sacred and supernatural, and that even the lower animals in the houses, the streets, and the fields, were in many cases sacred. It was only in his own hut that he had learned, perchance, of something higher and better, if his circle retained, after four hundred years, any remembrance of the Lord God of their fathers, whose very name had been forgotten by most of his race.[1]

As to the world in which he lived, or the sky above him,

[1] Exod. iii. 13.

CHART OF THE WORLD AS KNOWN TO THE ANCIENT HEBREWS. BY MERX.

To the Hebrews, the East stood for our North, since the rising sun was the point from which they reckoned. The map is, therefore, placed on end; but if it be looked at sideways it will at once be intelligible. The Arabs to this day call the North "the left," the South "the right," and the East "that before" (facing the sun). Even so late as A.D. 1351, a sea chart, made at Florence, has the South at the top and the East on the left hand. The North is at the top of our maps as a result of the use of the compass.

The numbers mark the order in which the different nations are placed, counting from Palestine, the centre of the whole, with a fresh notation in each direction.

what could he know? The first rude attempt at a map was a wonder to a king of Egypt nearly a thousand years after this,[1] and at a still later period the Tigris and Euphrates were the eastern bounds of the Hebrew world—the southern shore of the Black Sea, and the district stretching from it to the Caspian, his farthest north. In Europe he knew only the shore of the Mediterranean; Egypt and its western and southern territories summed up his knowledge of Africa.[2]

Nor need we boast, for the maps of our forefathers reveal almost as narrow conceptions of the world. A Mediæval map of the earth could not be recognized as such without careful study, as I shall have occasion to show in a future page.

The nearest approach we have to the ideas of the phenomena of nature in an age so remote as that of Genesis, is furnished by the ancient tablets of Nineveh, which reveal the notions entertained on these subjects by the race originally supreme in Mesopotamia—the so-called Accadians—whose glory had already departed before Abraham's day. The world, they thought, was a mere hollow convex shell, like a round boat or bowl. The upper surface was the earth with its waters; the concavity below, the abyss where the genii and the dead had their abode. Through this dark and cheerless region the sun made its way each night. Over the earth, the sky, studded with its fixed stars, stretched itself like a covering, and turned round the mountain of the east, the pillar which joins heaven and earth and serves as an axis for the celestial vault. The centre of the earth, however, was different from that of

[1] Anaximander of Miletus, B.C. 611-546, made the first attempt at a chart of the world. It was on brass. Hecatæus, B.C. 520, made a second.

[2] See map by Merx on page 53.

the skies, for like many ancient nations, the Accadians fancied their own land in the very middle of the world, while the mountain over the peak of which the sky of the fixed stars revolved was in the north-west. The sky, as a whole, rested on the edge of the earth, outside a great circle of ocean waters, which they, like the Greeks and other ancient nations, believed surrounded the world. The planets moved in a heaven below that of the fixed stars, and were the sources of the thunder, which, again, by rending the clouds, let the rain escape through the openings.

The ideas of physical science and natural phenomena which prevailed in the very days of Christ must have been far in advance of those of the days of Moses, thirteen hundred years earlier, and thus may help us to realize the notions of the ordinary Hebrew of that remote age. By a fortunate chance we find many of these in the Jewish Book of Enoch of that date,[1] from which the following are taken. What must have been the simplicity of the mind which could write as follows: "And they took me away to the place of the storm wind and to a mountain whose peaks reached to heaven. And I saw bright shining places[2] and the thunder at the ends of them. And they took me to the so-called water of life, and to the fire of the west[3] which receives every setting of the sun. And I came to a fiery stream, where fire flows like water, and pours itself into a great sea towards the west. And I saw all the great rivers, and came to a great darkness, and went on to where

[1] The Book of Enoch dates partly from the reign of Herod, partly from the time of Christ.

[2] The places where the light is stored up and from which the lightnings come.

[3] The fire of the west is a great fire ocean into which the sun dips each night to take up fresh fire for the next day.

all the dead wander about. And I saw the mountains of the black clouds of winter and the place into which the waters of the whole Deep pour themselves. And I saw the mouths of all the streams of the world and the mouth of the Deep.[1]

"And I saw the storehouses of the winds and the foundations of the earth. And I saw the corner-stone of the earth and the four winds which bear up the earth and the firmament of heaven. And I saw how the winds spread out the heights of the heavens, and they blow between heaven and earth and are the pillars of heaven. And I saw the winds that turn the heavens, and bring the circuit of the sun and of all the stars to their setting. And I went farther towards the south, where it burns, day and night, where the seven mountains of precious stones are." Beyond this he came to a place "where heaven and earth come to an end, and it serves for a prison for the stars of heaven and for the host of heaven. The stars which roll over the fires are those which have broken the commands of God by not rising at the time appointed them, and He was angry with them and bound them till the time when their punishment should be fulfilled.[2]

". . . From thence I went to the ends of the earth on which the heaven rests, and I saw the doors of heaven open. And I saw how the stars of heaven came out, and counted the doors from which they came out. . . . From thence I went to the north and saw the ends of the earth there. Here I saw these doors of heaven open. From each of these come out north winds: when they blow, it brings cold, hail, hoarfrost, snow, dew, and rain.

[1] Apparently the ocean, which was thought to flow round the earth.
[2] *Das Buch Henoch*, Kap. 17, 18.

When it blows only from one of these doors it is good, but when it blows from the others, it storms and brings distress on the earth.

"From thence I went to the south, to the ends of the earth there, and saw there open doors in the heaven. From out of these come forth the south wind, the dew, rain, and wind. Thence went I to the ends of the heaven at the east, and saw there three doors of heaven open, and over them little doors. Through each of these little doors come out the stars of heaven, and run towards the west on the way which is shown to them.

". . . And then I saw closed storehouses from which the winds are sent abroad, and the storehouses of the hail and of the mist and of the clouds. And I saw the houses of the sun and of the moon, from which they go forth and to which they return, and how they add nothing to their prescribed course and take nothing from it, and keep truth one with another, holding to their oath. . . . And I saw again lightnings and the stars of heaven, and I saw how the angel called them all to him by name and they hearkened to him. And I saw how they are weighed out with just balances, according to their light, and the distance of their course, and the time of their appearing and circuits, and how one lightning begets the other, and their circuits, according to the number of the angels, and how they keep truth among themselves. Also, another thing saw I concerning the lightnings, how some stars become lightnings and nothing is left of the stars.[1]

"And I saw six doors from which the sun goes forth, and six doors into which it passes in setting; the moon also rises and sets through these doors, and the leaders of the

[1] *Das Buch Henoch*, Kap. 33, 34, 36, 41, 43, 44. This refers to "shooting stars."

stars, with the stars which they lead. I saw also many windows right and left of these doors. And first goes forth the great light called the sun. The waggon in which it rises upwards is driven by the wind, and, when it sets, the sun vanishes from heaven and returns by the north, to get to the east again, and is so led that it comes to the proper door and shines in the heaven. In this way it rises through the great door, in the first month, the fourth of the six doors of the east. And in that fourth door, through which the sun rises in the first month, are twelve windows, from which, when at their appointed time they are opened, a flame comes forth. The sun rises through that fourth door for thirty days, and goes straight over to the fourth door of the west and sets through it. . . . Then it returns to the fifth door for thirty mornings, and sets through the fifth door in the west for as long, and so, next, with the sixth doors in the east and west, for thirty-one mornings." Having completed this series of changes they are then repeated backwards from the sixth door, successively, to the first door, the changes making the difference of the length of day and night round the year. "And so it rises and sets and never ceases or rests, but goes on day and night in its waggon, and its light is seven times as great as that of the moon, but in size the two are alike." "And I saw twelve doors in the round of the sun-waggon in heaven from which the beams of the sun break forth, and from them goes forth heat over the earth, when they are opened in their season." "And I saw waggons in the heavens such as there are on the earth, in which the never setting stars move."[1]

The writer's knowledge of the earth is on a par with that

[1] *Das Buch Henoch*, Kap. 43, 44, 72, 75.

of the heavens. He tells us that the earth has exactly seven highest mountains, seven greatest rivers, and seven greatest islands. It is hard to decide what mountains he means, but the rivers are less doubtful. The first comes from the west and pours itself into the "Great Sea"—that is, the Mediterranean. This is undoubtedly the Nile, which is conceived as flowing from the south-west, if indeed "west" be not a corruption for "south." Two, which must be the Euphrates and Tigris, come from the north, and pour their waters into the "Erythræan Sea," the common name for the Arabian and Persian Gulfs and the Indian Ocean. The four others "come from the north to their sea, two to the Erythræan Sea, two empty themselves in the Great Sea, or according to some in the wilderness." The Indus and the Ganges, which rise north of the writer, seem to be meant by the first two, the Oxus and Jaxartes by the others; the Black and Caspian Seas being supposed part of the Mediterranean. But perhaps "they lose themselves in the desert," that is, in Arabia! There is no mention of Europe at all, and Africa is known only by the Nile, while Eastern Asia is a mere dim imagination. Of the seven greatest islands two are on the land; that is, are land lying between rivers. These would be, apparently, Mesopotamia, and the island of Meröe on the Nile. Five are in "the Great Sea," the Mediterranean, and are no doubt Cyprus, Crete, and Rhodes, with perhaps Sicily, and the Morea, which might easily be fancied an island.[1] So small was the world to the Jew even in the days of Christ.

If the heavens and the earth were so limited in Jewish conceptions at the opening of the present era, what must they have been in the age of the forty years' wandering?

[1] *Das Buch Henoch*, Kap. 77.

How must the words of the first chapter of Genesis have sounded when they were heard for the first time, in all their startling contrast with the ideas of creation till then unchallenged? We can fancy the tribes assembled in the great "plains" of Wady es Sheykh and of Wady er Rahah, or of Wady Sebaijeh, under the mighty cliffs of Sinai,[1] rising terrace above terrace around, to hear the first reading of the book of the covenant;[2] the cloud of the Presence covering the mount, and the awful splendours of the Divine glory lighting through it "like devouring fire." The first words, as they fell from the lips of Moses or of the elders, and sounded far over the listening thousands, through the clear Eastern air, were themselves a stupendous revelation. Hitherto they had heard, in Egypt, for centuries, of Osiris and Horus, and a countless multitude of gods. They had seen men worshipping the sun as the great king of heaven, and the stars and moon as lesser deities, and they were soon to show, in the demand for a golden calf, the Egyptian symbol of the gods Apis and Mnevis,[3] or, perhaps, of one of the ox-gods of their original fatherland—Mesopotamia—that the gross ideas of the Nile valley had sunk deep into their minds.

But now they hear that "In the beginning, One, only, God created the heavens and the earth;" created, not fashioned them. What the "beginning" meant they could have understood as little as we, but it at least destroyed the universal belief of their day that nature was self-existing and eternal. They had no grand ideas of the vastness of

[1] The various neighbouring peaks of the Sinai group range from 6,500 to 8,000 feet in height above the sea level.

[2] Exod. xxiv. 7.

[3] Amos v. 25, has been referred to the period of the wilderness life, but Assyrian study shows it to have been spoken of Amos' own day.

the universe such as our astronomy has awakened. The High and the Low was their only conception of sky and earth. Nor had they even a word for the universe in our sense.[1] What they saw around and over them in the horizon of day or the splendours of night, was to them the creation. All this, they now heard, was the work of Elohim, a name conveying to them the conception of power and might, and in its plural form that of awful and incomparable majesty. Henceforth it is the glory of Israel, too often indeed to be forgotten by many, but yet to be treasured by the faithful, till at last it becomes the passionate boast of all, that this one living God summed up in Himself the power and glory of all the idols in Egypt and of the nations. From this time the great spirits of their race, age after age, realize Him as He who sitteth upon the circle of the earth; before whom its inhabitants are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in.[2] The moment of such a revelation was a supreme instant in the history of the world.

As the words of the second verse sounded forth—"And the earth was waste and wild; and darkness rested upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit, or breath, of God brooded upon the face of the waters"—a vision of universal desolation and darkness would rise before the awe-stricken multitudes; of a heaving, fathomless, incomprehensible abyss, tumultuous like the stormy ocean, which they had seen so lately when they crossed its dried bed. There was a time, then, they would think, when these sky-piercing mountains, at whose foot they stood, were not, nor the

[1] See Umbreit, in *Studien und Kritiken* (1866), pp. 706 ff.
[2] Isa. xl. 22.

great sky, nor the wide earth ; when there was only a shoreless surging chaos, veiled in night and terror ; a waste lighted by no beams of sun or stars. But over this, when it pleased Elohim, His Spirit went forth to brood, dove-like, and wake it to life and order. To us the picture is familiar from infancy, but what must it have seemed when first proclaimed?

But now they hear—"And God said, Let there be light : and there was light." So then the mighty light is the first-born of God. He Himself remains unseen and unimagined, but His approach, to form a world, is heralded by the glorious splendours of day. No sun is mentioned ; the mind is left to think only of the face of God. It is His coming nigh, covered with the light as with a garment, the light of an Eastern sky ; veiling Himself in the insufferable brightness that fills the wide earth and heaven. Presently, before Him, the horror of thick darkness, terrible as that of the land of the shadow of death, rolls away like clouds before the sun, and the weltering chaos lies in brightness.

In Egypt they had worshipped Set, the principle of evil, as well as Osiris, the beneficent ; but now they heard that Elohim reigns alone, as the Author of good, for the sacred light was good, and He had sent it. Henceforward, they hear, it was appointed that the light and the darkness should each have its separate place,[1] its special nature, and its fixed time of appearing. So day and night are alike the gift of God, and both alike are full of His presence. Primeval darkness, before which they had trembled, He has called Night, "the veiled and dark ;" the holy light is to be known as Day, "the shining." And so the first day has ended, not as with us, in darkness, but, as if in auspi-

[1] Job xxvi. 10 ; xxxviii. 19.

cious augury for our world, with the bursting forth of the new created light.

And now, as the voice of the speaker proceeds, a new scene opens. The wild and waste landscapes of chaos stretch out, cleared of the mantle of mists and vapours till now lying dense upon them, and a wide expanse appears, bearing up the clouds into which these had been transformed. The blue sky overcanopies all, with its ministries of rain and dew, so grateful in the burning East; for the firmament is the storehouse of both, and it is thence that they drop fatness over the land. How the waters rise and are sustained aloft the simple Hebrew does not dream, except that it is by the power of God; nor does he know more of the aërial heights than that they are "the expanse," or "the high," in which the clouds and rains have their appointed place.[1]

[1] I cannot forbear quoting the following magnificent passage from John Ruskin.

"An unscientific reader knows little about the manner in which the volume of the atmosphere surrounds the earth; but I imagine that he could hardly glance at the sky when rain was falling in the distance, and see the level line of the bases the clouds from which the shower descended, without being able to attach an instant and easy meaning to the words, 'expansion in the midst of the waters.' And if, having once seized the idea, he proceeded to examine it more accurately, he would perceive at once, if he had ever noticed anything of the nature of the clouds, that the level line of their bases did indeed most severely and stringently divide 'waters from waters,' that is to say, divide water in its collected and tangible state from water in its divided and aërial state; or the waters which *fall* and *flow* from those which *rise* and *float*. I understand the making the firmament to signify that (so far as man is concerned) most magnificent ordinance of the clouds; the ordinance that as the great plain of waters was formed in the face of the earth, so also a plain of waters should be stretched along the height of air, and the face of the cloud answer the face of the ocean; and that this upper and heavenly should be of waters, as it were, glorified in their nature, no longer quenching the fire, but now bearing fire in their own bosoms; no longer murmuring only when the winds raise them, or rocks divide, but answering each other with their own voices from pole to pole; no longer restrained by established shores, and guided through unchanging channels, but going forth at His pleasure like the armies of the angels, and choosing their encampments on the heights of the hills: no longer hurried downwards for ever, moving but to fall, nor lost in the lightless accumulation of the abyss, but covering the East and the West with the waving of their wings, and robing the gloom of the farther infinite with a vesture of divers colours, of which the threads are purple and scarlet, and the embroideries flame."

There is now sky and light, and chaos, but presently there is another advance, showing that God is a God of order, working out His ends by successive regulated steps. His voice is anon heard commanding the waters to gather together to one place, and the dry land to appear. The great Seas and the firm Earth assume their bounds. The mountains and dry land rise from the deep, and the waters that couch under retire within the girdle of their shores. Israel learns that it was God who by Himself established the world and set fast the everlasting hills.

Presently they hear,—How, at the Almighty word, the slopes of the hills and the sweeping valleys are clothed with the tender grass, strewn with flowers, and roughened with waving forests. The lifting up of the mountains had created rivers; the calling forth of verdure and shadowing trees completes the ideal of joy to these children of the burning East. How must it have sunk into the hearts of all, to use the words of their own singer of other ages, that it is God, great and good, "who caused the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man, that he may bring forth food out of the earth, and wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oil that maketh his face to shine, and bread which strengtheneth man's heart." Could it then have been known that the grasses which yield this bread had been specially created for man's use, at his appearance on the earth, and did not belong to those earlier works of God of which we find the remains stored up for fuel, or bedded in the depths of the everlasting hills, the gratitude would have been still more vivid. For it is a great fact that while trees and plants of many kinds are found in formations of all the geological periods but the earliest, the grain-bearing grasses only came into existence

in the latest ages. There is not the slightest vestige of them in any of the strata; they are found only in surface deposits, in connection with the first signs of human presence. Along with them also, strange to say, are first found the herbs that minister to our pleasure, of which the sage, the marjoram, the mints and lavenders,[1] are representatives —and, still more striking, the fruits that delight the taste and maintain the health, the apple and all its related trees, the peach, the plum, the almond, the strawberry, and the like.[2] The Hebrew was doubtless filled with wonder at the goodness that had prepared the great table of nature for man so richly, but we may doubly feel it when we know that the round earth was filled with the finest of the wheat, and adorned with roses and flowers and luscious fruits, and made fragrant with mint and spikenard and frankincense, to greet man's birth.

As yet, however, the multitudes had heard nothing of the creation of the heavens except the spreading out of the expanse above the earth. But now they learn that on the fourth day, God commanded the two great "light-bearers" of the sky, and the great host of the stars, to shine forth, and serve their purpose to the new created world. Other nations worshipped them as, themselves, living and divine, but it was not to be so in Israel. They were only the creation of God's hand, and the obedient servants of His will. To man they would cheer day and night—the sun, the ruler of the day, the moon the queen of night; the stars, so preternaturally bright in Eastern lands, attending her and adding to the splendour. They would, moreover, serve for Signs, to mark out the heavenly spaces, to warn

[1] The Labiatæ.

[2] The Rosaceæ. See *Macmillan's Bible in Nature*, p. 100.

men of the storm, or give them hopes of brightness, and, by their eclipses and changes, to teach the ways of God—and they would fix the Times, throughout the year, for man's ordinances or employments ; the weeks, the months, the years themselves, the days of festivals and worship, with much besides. The keynote thus struck gave the tone henceforward to the relations of Israel to nature worship. The vaulted heavens were but the work of God's fingers : He had ordained the moon and the stars. What an education for a people, filling their hearts with thoughts till then unknown !

The heavens, lighted with sun and moon, and sown with stars, now shine down on the earth, but as yet there is no life. All things, however, are now ready for it, and the sacred roll tells forthwith, how God, advancing step by step, in Divine order, next spoke into being all things that fly, and all that swim ; the tribes of the air and of the waters—the two blue oceans, one over, one around ; the birds and other creatures, small and great, to sail through the one ; the fishes and sea beasts, through the other. Nor can we think there would be wanting a response of reverent filial love, when it was heard that the Eternal, forthwith, blessed His new made creatures. It would be theirs to be fruitful and multiply, and fill the seas and the earth. The teeming increase of the finny tribes was due to the bounty of Elohim, and He had given the bird its joyous life in the wide air. All are His, and all look up to Him. The thought thus awakened sank into the national mind. In after ages the Hebrew poet was to sing :—

> Beside the springs which Thou sendest into the valleys,
> The springs which run among the hills, . . .
> The fowls of the air have their habitation,

Which sing among the branches. . . .
In the great and wide sea—
Are creeping things innumerable,
Both small and great. There go the ships,
There is that leviathan which Thou hast made to play therein.
These wait all upon Thee!
That Thou may'st give them their meat in due season.[1]

The air and the waters now rejoice in living tribes, but the earth itself has as yet no such gladness. Now, however, God brings forth from it living creatures of all kinds; cattle and creeping thing; and beast of the earth; the wild tribes of the woods and of the deserts; cattle of all kinds for the use of man, but also the serpents and worms, and footless creeping things; and once more pronounces His blessing on all. Even the dreaded reptile and the humble worm, and the fierce tribes of the woods are His creatures, as well as the useful and loved. All things are from Him alone! No evil spirit has had a share in Nature, as the nations have dreamed. The heavens with their lights; the earth with its mountains and seas, its cedars and fruitful trees; the waters with their swarming populations; the air with its multitudinous life, already praised the Creator; and now the cattle on a thousand hills, and the beasts of the forest are added to the number of His works. Lesson is quickly following lesson, to form the creed of humanity. Centuries after, such teaching finds an echo in the words of Job; so well had it been learned—

Ask now the beasts, that they may teach thee,
The birds of the heaven, that they may let thee know;
Or inquire of the earth, that it may instruct thee,
And let the fishes of the sea give thee knowledge:—

[1] Ps. civ. 10, 12, 25–27.

Who knows not, among all these,
That the hand of God hath created the whole ?
He, in whose hands are the souls of all living things,
And the breath of all mankind ![1]

But among all the creatures none had yet appeared able to honour and worship the great Creator. Each race depended on a higher, but the highest of beings yet made had neither reason nor the faculties of spiritual life. Now, however, it is told how man was created in God's image, of the dust of the ground, and endowed with a living soul from the breath of the Almighty Himself. What that "image" meant to the Hebrew it is easy to imagine. God had been revealed to him as holy and just and pure, and he felt in his own breast the capacity to know what such attributes meant, and to imitate them in his own soul. God was the Highest wisdom, and he felt that he had himself caught a beam of His nature in the possession of reason, with all its powers. God was the Sovereign Lord of man himself, of all the creatures, and of the inanimate glories of heaven and earth. The Hebrew felt that, in this respect, he was the representative of the Creator to the animal world ;[2] for all feared him—all were made subject to him or might be made so, for pleasure, or for use. He had seen, in Egypt, the lion trained to hunt for his master, and leave the prey he caught uneaten, himself returning to his master's side ; the cat trained to fetch the wounded bird from the thickets of the Nile, and even the hyena tamed and made of use. He had watched the Egyptian harpoon and noose the huge hippopotamus, and catch and drag to shore the hideous crocodile. Even the powers of nature were strangely subject to

[1] Job xii. 7–10. The date of Job is apparently the 7th century B.C. So, G. Baur, Lange, Ewald, Bleek, De Wette.

[2] Goethe's saying in this light, is striking : "Man is the dog's god."

his will,—for the air filled the sail, the rocks were quarried into temples, the mines yielded their wealth, and the wisdom of the Egyptian priests had searched out many secrets of plants, and minerals, and even some mysteries of the distant stars and of the planets. Such endowments bespoke the possession of the Image of God. But, if so then, how much more so now, when man has made the lightning his messenger, and laid a pathway for it in the depths of the seas, to run forth on his will;—has tamed the thunder;—crosses the ocean in the face of wind and storm;—has climbed into the skies and descended to the bottom of the waters;—has pierced the hills to make himself a way, and passes from place to place at the speed of a bird.

Nor was the very form of man less divine—erect, noble, looking to heaven, for man alone naturally looks upwards; or this fair body, only the veil and image and instrument of the soul within. Between the lordly Adam and all creatures else, how great the gulf!

The Mosaic account of creation carried all this, and much besides, to the hearts even of those who first received it. So great a revelation had never been made to man, for it disclosed the existence of the One Eternal, Holy, Just and Good God,—a God of wisdom and order, as well as purity and truth, and implied His right to our absolute obedience and love, as the work of His hands. There remained only another self-disclosure, of still greater condescension, when He declared Himself to mankind in the person of His incarnate Son.

CHAPTER VI.

ADAM AND EVE.

The few verses in which Scripture speaks of our first parents leave so much untold, that a natural curiosity has, in all ages, wearied itself by filling up the outline as fancy prompted. The name Adam, which is applied to both the man and the woman, seems to imply that they were of a reddish colour rather than white, like ourselves; but even this is doubtful, for the allusion may be only to the fact of their creation from the dust of the ground,—the redness referring simply to that of the general colour of soil, as we often speak of the brown or red furrows of the plough.

Adam can hardly be called a distinctive name given to our first parent individually. It is rather a title of honour given him as the progenitor of the race, for it is constantly used in the Bible, of mankind at large, as Man. While, however, no name but that of The Man has come down to us as that of our great father, the name of Eve, borne by the mother of us all, was most fitly given, meaning, as it does, simply, Life. It is characteristic of the earnest and grave view of things peculiar to the Hebrews, that the first man bears a name reminding us all of our lowliness and mortality, rather than alluding to our superiority to other creatures. In our own language the word man means "the thinking being;"[1] in the Greek, *anthrōpos* means "the up-

[1] From Sanscrit *mna*, "to think." It is also the same in modern Tahitian.

ward-looking one," or, according to modern philologers, "the being of the noble countenance;" while the Latin *homo*, long thought to be derived from *humus*, "the ground," is now held to mean the "speaking one." The Hebrew is contented to think of our race as "him who sprang from the dust." In striking accordance with this the Phœnician Cosmogony speaks of the first man, "Adam Qadmun," as created from the earth, as, also, do Libyan traditions. In Egypt he was thought to have been made of the mud of the Nile. Even in Peru and North America the Indians held the same opinion of our being at first made from the dust. The ancient Chaldeans called the first man "him whom the earth produced." So widely spread have been the echoes of the Bible narrative. It is noteworthy, moreover, that the Phœnician name for our first mother is Havah, the same word as that in our Hebrew Bibles, which is written as "Eve" in our version.

The speculations and fancies in which many have indulged respecting our first parent, have been too often as fanciful as they are idle. Thus the Rabbis tell us that his height was so great he could see from one end of the world to the other, and that, when he lay down, his head and his feet were so far apart that it would have taken five hundred years to walk from the one to the other. They add, however, that when he sinned, God "laid His hand upon him," and reduced him to the more moderate stature of a hundred and fifty feet. This, indeed, was a signal mercy, for till then his heel had eclipsed the sun, so that the creatures, and even the angels, mistook him for God, and would have worshipped him had not he checked them.

Some, however, maintain that even after he had sinned, he was so gigantic that, having to cross the ocean after

being driven from Paradise, he waded safely to land, like Orion or Polyphemus in Virgil; his shoulders, or even half his body, above the flood.[1]

His physical beauty is the subject of wild inventions. God, it is said, wishing to create him, clothed Himself in a perfect human body, that He might have a pattern from which to make him literally in His own image. Indeed, not only the Rabbis, but Christian writers have played with this fancy, asserting that it was the Word, the Second Person in the Trinity, who thus assumed a human form, and that the body thus taken was that seen by St. Peter on Tabor at the transfiguration, and by Moses on Mount Sinai.

Even the dust of which our first parents was made has engaged the speculations of many. It was gathered, say the Rabbis, from every part of the world: that of the body from Babel, that for the head from Palestine, and that for the limbs from all other countries.[2] Many Rabbis have even fancied that Adam and Eve were originally created with one body between them, the two heads turned back to back, Eve being afterward separated and presented to Adam as his wife.[3]

As to knowledge, our first parent has been supposed by such dreamers to have excelled all men since. It was a favourite mode of stating this, among Christian writers before the Reformation, to say, that the great master Aristotle was almost as learned as Adam. But the Rabbis have

[1] Virgil, Æn., x. 763; iii. 655.

[2] Bayle's *Dictionnaire*, art. "Adam."

[3] Ibid. Lenormant quotes a number of ancient traditions which illustrate in various fanciful ways the Bible statement of the derivation of man and woman from one original. He himself thinks that the Hebrew text means that Eve was formed *at* Adam's side, not *from* it. It is at least striking that Jewish and, one may say, universal tradition favours this idea. *Les Origines de l'Histoire*, pp. 51–55. Bretano's *Bible*, i. 16. Baring Gould's curious book, *Legends of Old Testament Characters*, contains many additional fancies in the same strain.

gone further ; for, not content with comparing him with Moses and Solomon, to whom they ascribed superhuman attainments, they maintain that he knew more than the angels. These glorious beings, they tell us, having shown a disposition to depreciate the new creature when he was first made, God told them that he was of higher intelligence than they. To prove this, having summoned all the lower animals, He asked the angels to give them appropriate names ; a task they owned to be beyond their powers. Adam, however, on being invited to undertake it, at once did so, and even gave to God the name Jehovah. This vast knowledge and intellect is cleverly made by the later Rabbis the explanation of the saying of their predecessors, that Adam's stature was so enormous. It was meant, they say, of his intellectual greatness.

This vast mental equipment was derived, we are told, from a book sent down from heaven, containing six hundred and seventy writings, which put the one thousand five hundred keys of knowledge, kept from the angels, into Adam's hands. But when he sinned, this book flew up to heaven, and poor Adam, beating his brow and weeping sore, rushed into the river Gihon up to his neck, coming out a rusty red !

His stay in Paradise is spoken of as only a single day. In the first hour, the dust of which he was formed was brought together ; in the second it was made into a shapeless mass ; in the third, his limbs were stretched out ; in the fourth, his soul was put in him ; in the fifth, he stood on his feet ; in the sixth, he gave all things and creatures their names ; in the seventh, Eve was created ; in the eighth, Cain and a sister were born ; in the ninth, Adam was told not to eat the forbidden fruit ; in the tenth, he

sinned; in the eleventh, he was pardoned; and in the twelfth, he was driven out of Paradise.[1]

St. Jerome supposed that our first parent was buried at Hebron; but this did not please the fancy of the day, which clung to the earlier idea that he was laid to rest on Mount Calvary. This was, indeed, the view of most of the Fathers. "Here," says Tertullian, "we maintain the first man was buried; here Christ suffered; here He moistened the earth with His holy blood; that the dust of Adam, mingled with the blood of Christ, might be washed pure by the virtues of the dropping stream."[2]

It was early urged, as a difficulty in receiving this beautiful legend, that the waters of the Flood must have obliterated all traces of our great forefather's grave. But invention was fertile. Already in the fourth century the teacher of St. Ephrem explained to that saint at Edessa, that at the time of the Deluge Noah lived in Syria; that he planted in the plains of Sodom the cedars of which the ark was to be built; that he carried with him in the ark the bones of Adam; and that when the Flood subsided he divided them among his three sons, giving the skull to Shem, whose descendants, having received Judæa as their inheritance, buried the sacred relic on Calvary, where the tomb had formerly been.[3]

Some of the most eminent of the Fathers held that Adam was one of the first raised from the dead with our Lord; and the Rabbis have a touching legend, that he would have died of sorrow after his sin, had not God sent an angel to console him.

[1] Eisenmenger's *Judenthum Entdecktes*, vol. i. p. 635.
[2] *Carm. cont. Marcion.*, c. 4.
[3] Cornelius à Lapide, *In Genesin*, c. ii. v. 9.

Cornelius à Lapide adds the strange invention, that Seth, at the command of an angel, put a seed of the forbidden tree into the mouth of Adam at his burial, and that a tree grew from it which afterwards furnished the wood of our Saviour's cross; so that the very tree which had led to the Fall became the instrument of our redemption. The Jews, however, have a legend from which this is evidently borrowed; that the angels bore to Adam, in the desert, a branch of the tree of life, which Seth forthwith planted. This grew to a lordly size, and in after ages supplied the rod of Moses, the branch which sweetened the bitter waters of Marah, and the pole on which the brazen serpent was raised.

The question must often rise, What was the religious belief of our first parents? and on this subject Jewish writers, whose study of the ancient Scriptures has been more intense than that of any others, are, perhaps, best entitled to speak. According to Dr. Beer, a learned German Rabbi, the first ten chapters of Genesis, when read without prejudice and with eyes open to the truth, supply the answer, which is summed up in the following particulars:—

Adam, he thinks, must have held: 1. That God alone created the universe; that He existed, of necessity, before creation, and must exist for ever without change, which would imply that He is Immaterial and Eternal.

2. That harmony prevails throughout creation, each part fitting like the wheels of a watch into the whole design, and working with every other, to bring about the one great end, of universal perfection, happiness, and peace. Hence Adam must have realized that the great Master of the Whole was One, Only, and All-Wise.

3. That this Great Being made the world from nothing; that the existence of all creatures depends absolutely on His will; that He interrupts the course of nature, that is, works miracles, when He thinks fit, and that He is, therefore, Supreme and Almighty.

4. That all that has been or is owes its first source to Him, and has been and is upheld directly by Him—that is, He is Omnipresent.

5. That He created man, as to his soul, in His own image: that is, spiritual, free, and immortal. Hence He must love virtue and hate vice, or, in other words, He must be a Holy God.

6. That the lot of man is often felt to correspond with his conduct, thus showing the Righteousness of God. But, the fact that this is not always realized here, is an absolute proof that our conduct and our lot will be brought, hereafter, to correspond. Hence Adam must have believed in a Future State.

7. That God watches, with an all-embracing Providence, over all things; especially over man at large, and each individual in particular, and thus must be All-Good.

8. That man is weak, and wrought upon by impulses from within and temptations from without. That when he sins God pardons him, on his seeing and repenting of his faults. Thus Adam must have believed in the Tender Pity and Mercy of the Heavenly Father.

9. That God demands, not on His own account, for He is high above all wants, but for the good of man himself, our homage and obedience to His Sovereign will, not only in the most secret thoughts, but also outwardly; and that He has hence given us Commands and Prohibitions—

some of abiding force, others for particular circumstance and times.[1]

The Christian naturally adds to this simple creed that Adam must have had a trust in the mysterious promise of a future Deliverer—the Seed of the Woman, who should bruise the head of the serpent, and undo the ruin of the Fall. It may have been that the wondrous grace thus foreshadowed was perceived only very imperfectly; but, on the other hand, the same heavenly pity that gave the consolation, perhaps revealed its Divine completeness. It is impossible, indeed, to conjecture how much may have been disclosed to one who stood in such unique relations to his Maker.

It might have been expected that we should find some account of the creation of Man in the Assyrian legends, but unfortunately those which seem to refer to it are sadly mutilated. The name of the first man, in Assyrian, strange to say, is Admu, or Adamu, the Assyrian form of the Hebrew Adam;[2] which some regard as designating the "brown race," in opposition to Sarku, "the clear or fair." A line in an early magical text of Babylonia shows, in a not very complimentary way, that the Babylonians believed woman to have been taken out of the man, as in Genesis. Of seven evil spirits mentioned, we are told that "the woman from the man do they bring forth." In the Egyptian records the god Chnumis makes man of clay, on a potter's wheel.[3] Other fancies, however, made the four races of men, exclusive of the negro, spring from the tears of Horus, and the work of the goddess Sekhet,—a personi-

[1] Beer: *Geschichte, Lehren, und Meinungen der Juden* (1820), vol. I. pp. 12 ff.
[2] Delitzsch, *Chald. Gen.*, p. 304. Lenormant, *Origines*, p. 47.
[3] Chabas: *Études*, p. 87.

fication of the eye of Horus, or the sun. But still other inventions ascribe man as sprung from the eye, and the gods from the mouth of that deity.[1]

The story of our First Parents has furnished a theme for poets from the earliest ages. Victor, a rhetorician of Marseilles, so long ago as the middle of the fifth century, composed a metrical paraphrase on Genesis, one passage of which, relating to the Fall, is curious. Adam and Eve, having sinned, and having been driven from Paradise, are humbly praying, when, suddenly, the hated serpent is seen gliding past. The ruined pair start at the sight, indignant at the presence of the cause of all their misery. Eve is the first to speak. Adam, if the sight of the author of their sorrows moves him, should, she thinks, snatch one of the stones, which lie thick around, and destroy the source of their ruin. Nor is he unwilling. He would fain let that which had brought death on them know how sad a thing it is to die, and follows it with a shower of stones; Eve, also, hurling as many as she can while it glides off. But one stone, sharp-edged, strikes on a flinty rock, and a spark leaps forth and catches in the dry leaves around. Presently it leaps from leaves to shrubs, and, ere long, the whole wood around is in flames.

At such a catastrophe our first parents flee terrified, but, soon, overawed by the terrible spectacle, they stop to gaze on a scene so strange to them. Wondering, they see the thick foliage stript from the now bare slopes, and the grove heaped with embers. The sun is obscured by smoke, but the whole landscape is lighted up by the new brightness. Great globes of fire are carried off from the growing trees

[1] *Trans. Soc. Bib. Arch.*, vol. iv. p. 45. Vigouroux: *La Bible et Les Découvertes Modernes*, vol. i. p. 188.

by the wind, and the flames eat deep to the roots. There, the heat reaches the rich veins, which presently melt and pour out streams of metal. Gold sparkles and glows in its yellow course; silver flows forth shining like milk, and copper winds along, limpid as water.[1]

After a time the wild storm of fire passes and things resume their wonted course, but the chance spark has revealed to man the two great discoveries of fire and of the metals.

But a greater poet than Victor has given us, in our own language, though before it had become our modern English, an imaginative picture of the first days of mankind. Cædmon, an Anglo-Saxon, or rather Englishman, born towards the close of the seventh century, a tenant on the lands of the abbey of Whitby, and a convert to Christianity, in his metrical paraphrase of parts of Holy Scripture, has left us the legacy of a true poet. He sings of the Creation, the War in Heaven, the fall of Satan, and of his counsellings in Hell, as the strong Angel of Presumption or Pride.

The poem is so curious, and in many respects so noble, that a brief glance at the leading ideas of the part of it referring to our First Parents, may be of interest. It opens with an ascription of praise to the Almighty, the glorious Lord of Hosts. In the beginning He ruled the heavens. The angels, when created, surrounded Him, bright and full of bliss as their Great Original, because sinless. But after a time their guardian, "for pride, sank into error," and "turned away from the love of God." He and those who followed him thought they could divide the heavens against God. Satan proposed to seize a home in the north

[1] C. M. Victoris, *Super Genesin Comment.*, given by Fabricius in his *Corpus Poetarum Ecclesiasticorum.* (1572. Basileæ.)

and make it the lofty seat of a new empire under himself. But God was wroth at his presumption, and having prepared a place of punishment for these false ones, took away their courage and drove them out of heaven.

> Their vaunt was quelled ; their threat shattered ;
> Their grandeur bowed ; their beauty corrupted,
> For that they had devised 'gainst God to war.

Peace now, once more, reigned in heaven, but the home of the rebel angels was vacant, and God pondered how He might create a better race. The earth as yet lay waste.

> There had not here, as yet, save cavern shade,
> Aught been. The wide abyss stood, deep and dark.

The earth lay like

> A dark cloud, lowering in eternal night,
> Swart under heaven, both dark and waste.
> The ocean, shrouded with eternal night,
> Stretched far and wide.

Then went forth the guardian Spirit of Heaven, bright with the upper glory, and passed over the deep with utmost speed, and the Creator of angels bade the "holy light" come forth over its spacious bosom, and was presently obeyed. The firmament, "the roof of nations," He next "hove up from the earth by His own word."

> Then came o'er earth, swift journeying,
> The third great morn.

Here, unfortunately, there is a break, after which an account of the creation of woman is given, that of man being apparently lost.

Adam was fast at rest and softly slept.
He knew not pain and had no suffering,
Nor from his wounds flowed any blood.
But from his side the Lord of angels
Drew forth a jointed bone : he, yet, unwounded,
And of it formed a goodly woman.

Paradise, the home of the new pair, is thus described :—

It stood good and spiritual, filled with gifts.
Fair washed the general land both running water
And welling brooks. No clouds, as yet,
Over the ample ground bore rains,
Lowering with winds.
Yet with all fruits earth stood adorned.

The poet now returns to the rebellion of Satan, and passes on to his plot against man. Glorious as "the light of stars," "he rebelled—sought speech of hate and words of pride, nor would serve God." Summoning his hosts, he thus addressed them :—

"Wherefore shall I toil ?
No need have I of master. I can work
With my own hands great marvels, and have power
To build a throne more worthy of a god,
Higher in heaven. Why shall I, for His smile,
Serve Him and bow me thus in vassalage ?
I may be God as He.
Stand by me, strong supporters, firm in strife.
Hard-mooded heroes, famous warriors,
Have chosen me for Chief : one may take thought
With such, for counsel, and, with such, secure
Large following. My friends in earnest they,
Faithful in all the shaping of their minds ;
I am their master, and may rule this realm."

Then comes the fall from heaven.

The fiend, with all his host, fell, then,
Long as three days and nights, from heaven to hell.

There each of all the fiends, each night—
A night immeasurably long—have a renewal
Of their fierce penal fires : then, before dawn,
The Eastern wind brings frost, and bitter cold.

With a striking similarity of treatment to that of Milton, a thousand years later, Satan is now introduced, addressing his followers in hell.

Then spake the haughty king, of angels
Erst the brightest. He had shone white in heaven
Till his soul urged, and, most of all, his pride,
That to the word of God, the Lord of Hosts,
He should not bend. About his heart, his soul
Tumultuously heaved, hot pains of wrath
Flamed round him.
Then spake he : "This narrow place is most unlike
That other we once knew, high in the heavens,
Which my Lord gave me, though, therein no more
For the Almighty we hold royalties.
Yet right He hath not done in striking us
Down to the fiery bottom of hot hell—
And having stripped us of heaven's kingdom,
To decree that He will set in it the race of man.
Worst of my sorrows this, that earth-born Adam
My strong seat shall possess, and reign in joy,
While we endure this torment.
Oh ! had I but the freedom of my hands
Or could I be without for but one season—
One winter's space—with this host, I——
But iron binds me round : this coil of chains
Lies heavy on me. I, now, rule no more—
Close bonds of hell hold me their prisoner.

* * * *

God hath now devised a world and has made man
In His own likeness, that by him
He may repeople heaven with holy spirits,
To take our place.
Therefore we must strive zealously
That we on Adam, if we ever may,

And on his offspring, all our wrongs repair.
If we can but corrupt them, God will cast them down
To hell, and they will be our vassals here.
Think, all of you, how best you may deceive them.
He who shall that effect, for him
Shall recompense eternal be the meed,
So far as in this fire, henceforth,
Advantages may rise.
Him will I let sit by myself."

He who is known to us as Satan, forthwith volunteers, and is girt in full panoply for the mission, by the great chief himself.

Wheeling up from thence,
He parted through the doors of hell.
Lion-like in air,—in hostile mood
Dashing the fire aside with a fiend's power.

Reaching Eden, "he many speeches knew of grateful words." Making for the two trees of life and death—the former fair and beautiful: the latter "utterly black, dim, and dark"—he "cast him into a worm's body, and twining about the tree of death, took of its fruits." Bearing these, he forthwith went in search of Eve, and addressed her as a special messenger from God.

"Tell Adam," said he, "God has sent me as His vassal,
To tell him he should eat this fruit,
To increase his understanding, power, and strength;
To make his body shine like that of angels, and
His form more beauteous. He will need no treasure else
In the whole world."

Adam, however, repels the temptation. God has Himself spoken. He does not know this being. He is not like an angel, and has given no proof that God has really sent him. For himself, he trusts in God, who needs to send no

vassal. Disappointed in Adam, the emissary turns again to Eve, and warns her that God will resent this refusal to obey His order, but if she eat, she will grow wise, and learn how to meet the emergency and ward off the punishment, Her eyes will be made so clear that they will see even to the Throne of God, and she will be able to win over Adam from his fatal disobedience to the Divine message, especially if both she and he—the Tempter—press him. If she do this, he will hide from God the slanders Adam has spoken of Him—that "he was not God's angel," that he was "untruthful," and the like.

At last, "her weaker mind began to yield," in spite of the words of God, and she takes the fruit from the Tempter, who now sends her to Adam. If she get him to eat it, she will save him from the punishment of his having refused to listen to God's messenger. She tastes some before her husband; tells him how sweet it is—how mild—and how her eyes are opened so strangely that she sees "from hence to where God sits, with bliss encircled."

> "I see His angels compass Him with feathery wings,
> And hear the gladness of the firmament."

All day she urges Adam, Satan following to excite and urge him, till at last "even in the man the mind began to turn." Beguiled by so much temptation, he comes to think the messenger may be really sent of God, and so

> He from his wife took hell and death.—
> Then laughed the bitter-purposed messenger.
> He had won honour in hell: God's goodness counter-worked:
> Filled hell with slaves.

And now "he turns him downwards" to the broad flames —the roofs of hell—where lay his master, bound in fetters.

The light that had charmed Eve fades away as the Tempter leaves. Both she and Adam feel that they have sinned. She, penitent-minded, "wept," and "sometimes to prayer they fell together."

In hell there is great rejoicing. Satan need no longer bear sorrow in his breast, though he lies bound. The children of men must needs lose heaven, and must revert to him, here, in the flames, and not to God. "All our evils are avenged."

Meanwhile, Adam and Eve "spake many words of care together." "Eve had brought about their ruin. Did she not hear the swart hell raging? The realm of heaven was most unlike that flame. Well may they sorrow for his journey."

> "Hunger and thirst now tear me—heat and cold,
> How shall I bear them? See, I stand here, bare,
> With garment unprotected."

It almost "rues him" that God had created Eve. Her answer is meekness itself.

> "Thou mayest reproach me with thy words,
> Adam, my loved one, but thou canst not rue
> Worse in thy mind than I do in my heart."

Adam's one thought is now to know the will of the All-Powerful One, and what penalty would be imposed. Were he told to wade in the sea, he would do it.

> "It were not so fearfully deep, nor yet
> Its stream so fearfully great, but I would go
> To the abyss, God's will to execute."

He was willing to undergo any atonement, now he had forfeited the favour of his Lord. "But we, thus bare, must now not be together." They both depart, and "sorrowing

went, into the greenwood," sitting apart, to await the mandates of heaven's King. Then their bodies they bedecked with leaves, and now join in prayer. "Every morn" they besought the Lord, not to forget them, and that He would show them how they should henceforth live.

> Then came, walking, the Lord Almighty,
> After midday, in Paradise.

Adam and Eve, "sad-minded," under the tree-shade, "of happiness bereft," retire, and hide themselves in a cavern, but the voice of God calls them. Adam owns his guilt. A criminal, his sin is painful to him, and he dare not come before the Lord—"he is all naked." The words of Scripture are then paraphrased, and in the end Adam is told,

> "Thou shalt another country seek—a dwelling place
> Less joyous far—naked and poor—of Eden's bliss bereft.
> To thee a parting is decreed of body and soul.
> Thou shalt bear a sweaty countenance
> While here thou livest, till, at last,
> With thee, at heart, shall grapple fell disease."

But while they were driven from Paradise,

> Yet continued still the roof of holy stars,
> And all earth's riches God them amply gave.

This is a brief abstract of the first section of a poem remarkable not only for its force of invention, but as among the earliest creations of English poetry.

Many poets, besides, have in different ages, made our First Parents their theme, but there are few passages in any which equal for beauty of expression or of fancy that in which James Montgomery, in his "World Before the Flood," imagines their last moments.

The Rabbis have given Adam a place in heaven, at its

gate, among the penitent, but it was left to a Christian poet to throw over his memory the soft charm of such an incident as is sketched in the lines that follow. The night is so wild and stormy that to Enoch, who speaks, it seemed as if "the world itself would perish with our Sire." The Patriarch tells how, in his last moments, Adam

> Closed his eyelids with a tranquil smile,
> And seemed to rest in silent prayer awhile :
> Around his couch with filial awe we kneeled,
> When suddenly a light from heaven revealed
> A SPIRIT, that stood within the unopened door ;—
> The sword of God in His right hand He bore ;
> His countenance was lightning, and His vest
> Like snow at sunrise on the mountain's crest ;
> Yet so benignly beautiful His form,
> His presence stilled the fury of the storm ;
> At once the winds retire, the waters cease ;
> His look was love, His salutation, Peace !
>
> Our Mother first beheld Him, sore amazed,
> But terror grew to transport as she gazed :
> —'Tis He, the Prince of Seraphim, who drove
> Our banished feet from Eden's happy grove ;
> "Adam, my life, my spouse, awake !" she cried,
> "Return to Paradise, behold thy Guide,—
> Oh, let me follow in this dear embrace !"—
> She sank, and on his bosom hid her face.
> Adam looked up : his visage changed its hue,
> Transformed into an angel's at the view ;
> "I come," he cried, with faith's full triumph fired,
> And in a sigh of ecstasy expired.[1]

To make the conception perfect it needed only the additional touch, which is added, that Eve dies on her husband's breast, and the two thus enter the heavenly Paradise together.

[1] James Montgomery's "World Before the Flood," Cant. 4.

CHAPTER VII.

THE STORY OF EDEN.

No subject has been more earnestly or more largely discussed than the locality intended by Moses in his account of the residence of our first parents. Eden—in Assyrian, Edinu, a name derived from the old Accadian word for a "country plain," not, as had been supposed, from the Hebrew word for delight—has been sought not only in every part of the world, but even outside it, for from the second to the tenth century, not a few of the Fathers, and after them others, held that it was the same as the Paradise of which the New Testament speaks, and lay in secret remoteness, half on the earth and half in heaven.

These fond dreamers could not think of any spot of the known earth, now so corrupt, as fit for the abode of primal innocence, and being fettered by no geographical difficulties, sought it in the mysterious spaces of the great Western Ocean. Far in the dimness of that vast unknown sea, it was fancied, lay a country in which man had dwelt at first, but which he had left, for the lands on this side of the great waters, after the Flood. In that happy region rose a mountain, in three giant steps, high into the heavens; so high, indeed, that the waters of the Flood, at their full, washed only its base, when all other mountains were sunk beneath them. All kinds of wondrous plants, metals, and precious stones combined to enrich it, but its greatest glory

was in its river, the waters of which lost their heavenly taste only when they had reached the surface of our earth. A single stream flowed from under the throne of God into its gardens,—the choicest of which lay on the highest part of the mountain, towards the east,—and there divided itself into four, which, after watering the whole mountain, disappeared into the ground and flowed beneath hell, the ocean, and the earth, to re-appear as the Euphrates and Tigris in Armenia, and as the Nile in Ethiopia. Others fancied that the three great rivers thus welling up from the subterranean waters of Paradise were the Euphrates, the Indus, and the European Danube. The Indus, however, was believed to be only the Nile, for it was supposed that it flowed round the Persian Gulf, and northwards through Ethiopia as the great Egyptian river. Some, for the Danube substituted the Ganges, and others, in the end, came to think that, after all, Eden must be in the East, but that it lay there shut in behind terrible mountains which no mortal foot had ever crossed.

In the later Jewish times and early ages of Christianity, a similarly unrestricted play had been left to invention. It was only needed to put Eden in the farthest north or east, and no one could disprove it. The writer of the Book of Enoch relates how "as he looked towards the north, over the mountains, he saw seven mountains full of precious balsam and odorous trees, and cinnamon and pepper. From thence I went over the summits of these mountains far towards the east, and passed on still farther over the sea, and came far beyond it. And I came into the garden of righteousness, and saw a many-coloured crowd of trees of every kind, for many and great trees flourish there, very noble and lovely, and the tree of wisdom, which gives wis-

dom to any one who eats of it. It is like the Johannis bread tree ; its fruit is like a cluster of grapes, very good ; and the fragrance of the tree spreads far around. And I said, 'Fair is this tree, and how beautiful and ravishing its look!' And the holy angel Raphael, who was with me, answered and said to me, 'This is the tree of wisdom of which thy forefathers, thy hoary first parent, and thy aged first mother ate, and found the knowledge of wisdom, and their eyes were opened, and they knew that they were naked, and were driven out of the garden.'"[1] Josephus is less extravagant in his locality, but equally singular in his geography. "The garden," says he,[2] "was watered by one river which ran round about the whole earth, and was divided into four streams. And Pison (the first stream), running into India, falls into the sea, and is called Ganges by the Greeks. The Euphrates and the Tigris[3] run into the Red Sea, and Gihon runs through Egypt, and means 'what rises in the east,' which the Greeks call the Nile." Fancies as vague prevailed till comparatively modern times, but they necessarily fell into disrepute as intelligence awoke and knowledge increased. Luther believed it impossible ever to discover the true locality. "Paradise, shut at first by the sin of man, has since been so utterly wasted and overwhelmed by the Flood that no trace of it remains." Calvin, on the other hand, would on no account grant this, and maintained that the world was the same as was created at first : adding that "Moses, indeed, in his opinion, accommodated his topography to the comprehension of his age."

[1] *Das Buch Henoch*, Kap. 32. [2] *Antiq.*, i. 1, 3.

[3] There has never been any dispute as to these two rivers being meant. Pĕrath (the sweet waters) is simply the old Assyrian name Purat. In old Persian it is Ufratu, "the fair flowing river." Hiddekel is the same word as Idikla, a name for the Tigris, in the Assyrian inscriptions. It means "the arrow-swift."

Paradise, the Reformer fancied, must have been between the east and Judæa, and indeed in Southern Mesopotamia, where he placed it, in a map prefixed to his Commentary.

Luther's opinion, however, became the more popular; for though it was hard to give up attempts to decide the locality of Eden, his idea of changes since brought about on the earth's surface offered a ready escape from any difficulties. It was hard, indeed, to believe that the Euphrates and Tigris, the Indus and the Ganges, or the Indus and the Oxus, or the Ganges and the Nile, had ever sprung from one parent stream, but attempts were made to explain the Gihon and the Pison so as to bring them closer together. They were identified by Reland as the Araxes, which falls into the Caspian, and the Phasis, which flows into the Black Sea; but as this placed Eden on the barren mountains of Armenia, various modifications of his views have since been made. They still, however, influence the investigations of not a few.

It would be wearisome to quote at length the widely contrasted opinions which offer themselves in the long list of writings more or less fully devoted to this subject, for it embraces not fewer than eighty treatises. Palestine, Syria, Armenia, Mesopotamia, Persia, the Delta of the Indus, Cashmere, one of the South Sea Islands, the Canary Islands, St. Gothard in the Alps, and even the shores of the Baltic, have been zealously advocated as the seat of Paradise, while General Gordon, of immortal memory, firmly believed it was in the Seychelles Islands, in the Indian Ocean: the forbidden fruit being, in his opinion, the double cocoa-nut peculiar to that group.

The most recent discussions are as widely opposed as

[1] A great Dutch theologian, born 1676, died 1718.

those of former times. Dillmann,[1] an eminent critic, for example, after defining the meaning of the names Pison and Gihon as "the broad-flowing," and "the breaker-forth," thinks that even names so little distinguishing, leave less difficulty than might be expected in understanding to what they refer. Cush, he goes on to say, is always, in the Old Testament, the name for the most southern lands and races of the then known earth, whether in the narrower sense of African Ethiopia, or as including the part of Asia to which also that name was given. Havilah is mentioned as a Cushite tribe on the southern coast of the Red Sea, and also as a tribe sprung from Joktan, on the Persian Gulf, and occurs along with Saba and Ophir. Even Judæa may be supposed to be meant from the products mentioned.[2] Pison and Gihon can hardly be any other than the Ganges and the Indus. The seat of Eden must therefore, in his opinion, be represented as at the Himalaya Mountains in Northern India, though the vast distance between the Mesopotamian rivers and those of Hindostan make it hard to think how the four could have been fancied as springing from one head. Professors Maspero[3] and Renan[4] tell us very positively that the moderns have succeeded in determining the site more exactly than the ancients. They have placed it in the mountains of Bolor (Belourtagh), not far from the point where that chain joins the Himalaya, on the plateau of Pamir. This

[1] Art. "Eden," Schenkel's *Bib. Lexicon*, vol. ii. p. 44.

[2] The bdellium of Havilah is supposed by Rosenmüller (*Handbuch Bib. Alt.*) to mean pearls. Mühlau and Volck, and Fürst, suppose it to have been an odorous resin or gum of a tree growing in Arabia, Media, and India. On the other hand, Lefmann (*Gesch. des Alten Indiens*, p. 1) compares the Hebrew word Bedolah, spelled by him Bedora, with the Sanscrit. Vadara = the cotton plant.

[3] *Histoire Ancienne* (1876), p. 133.

[4] *Histoire Générale des Langues Sémitiques* (3d ed.), pp. 476–490.

would place Eden on the other—northern—side of the stupendous range of the Hindoo Khoosh mountains, straight north from Peshawur, and east of Bokhara, on a plateau known as the Roof of the World, from its great elevation.

Ebers,[1] another distinguished critic, finds the Gihon in the Nile, which, he tells us, is still called Keōn by the Copts, and Gihon by the Abyssinians. But he adds that the name was given to many rivers by the dwellers on their banks, to flatter themselves with the belief that they lived in the seat of Paradise. Gihon, he thinks, was, also, the Ganges, which was still supposed to be one with the Nile, in the days of Alexander the Great.[2] In the same way the Euphrates was imagined by many in the second century after Christ to join the Nile,[3] and, even in the sixth century, the monk Cosmas,[4] the great geographical authority of the Middle Ages, makes the Ganges and the Nile one stream.[5] The difficulties thus raised are to Ebers so great that he ends by saying, "We entirely agree with Delitzsch, that 'Paradise is lost,' and the four streams are on this account a riddle which cries, 'Where was Paradise?' the question remaining without an answer."

[1] *Ægypten und die Bücher Moses*, pp. 29 ff.; Ges. *Thes.*, p. 282.

[2] *Arrian*, vi. 1. "Alexander, seeing crocodiles on the Indus, thought he had found the source of the Nile, fancying that it rose in India, and lost the name of Indus from flowing through the desert."

[3] Pausanias, ii. v. 2.

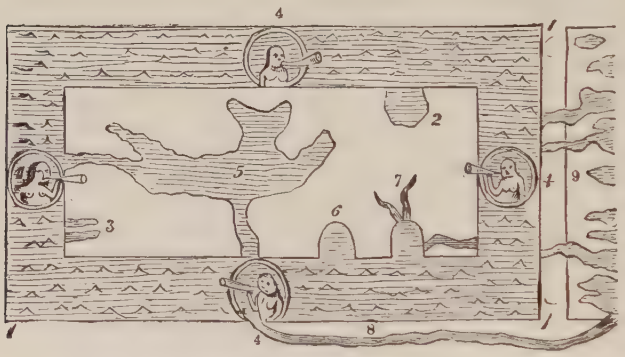
[4] An Alexandrian monk of the 6th century. He visited many countries in Asia and Africa. The science of his day may be judged from his maintaining that the earth was of a long narrow rectangular shape, surrounded by a high wall, and that towards the North Pole were high mountains, round which the sun, planets, and stars revolved. If this was the knowledge of the universe in his time, what must it have been 2,000 years before!

[5] Homer's idea of the world is seen in the lines, *Iliad*, xxi. 195–197.

> The ocean,
> From which all the rivers, and all the seas,
> And all the streams and springing brooks flow forth.

The ocean was, in fact, supposed to flow round the earth.

Undismayed by so many failures and by so many different theories, Sir Henry Rawlinson, a few years ago advanced a new view, with great confidence in its correctness. He tells us that the "Gan Eden," in which the Hebrews place "the Garden of Eden," was in reality the national name of the province of Babylon, and that the four rivers watering it are two branches of the Tigris and of the Euphrates, which are often used in the inscriptions, to



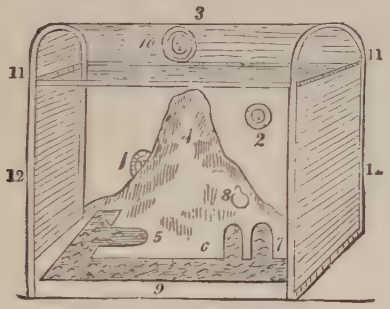
MAP OF THE WORLD BY COSMAS, "INDICOPLEUSTES," "THE MAN WHO SAILED TO INDIA." MIDDLE OF SIXTH CENTURY. FROM THE ORIGINAL PRINT IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

1. The great ocean surrounding the whole earth.
2. The Caspian Sea.
3. The river Pison.
4. The four great winds.
5. The Mediterranean.
6. The Red Sea.
7. The Persian Gulf, with the rivers Tigris, Euphrates, and part of the river Gihon.
8. The river Gihon (joined to the Nile).
9. The sources of the rivers and ocean.

describe the region, when its streams are to be mentioned.[1] Pressel, also, an accomplished scholar, has lately advanced once more, with great confidence, in a long monogram,[2] the view of Calvin, which has had many other supporters since,

[1] *Journal of Asiatic Soc.* (*Annual Report*, 1869), pp. xxiii. xxiv.
[2] *Paradies.* Herzog, vol. v. xx. pp. 332–377.

that Eden lay in the district on the Persian Gulf, where the Euphrates and Tigris unite to form the stream known as the Schatt el Arab. Calvin fancied the Pison and Gihon to have been the two mouths of this river; but it is a question whether they are both of ancient date. Pressel adopts a modification of this theory,[1] which he urges with remarkable acuteness. The Pison and Gihon, in his opinion, are the two eastern tributaries of the Schatt el Arab, the Karun and the Kertha. To get the "four heads," he supposes the describer as ascending the Eu-



THE HEAVENS AND EARTH OF COSMAS.

1. The setting sun.
2. The rising sun.
3. The arch of the heavens.
4. The mountain which receives the rising and setting sun.
5. The Mediterranean.
6. The Red Sea.
7. The Persian Gulf.
8. The Garden of Eden.
9. Part of the great ocean which flows round all the world.
10. The Creator surveying His works.
11. The firmament, dividing and supporting the upper waters.
12. The heavens at each side of the earth.

phrates, and thus meeting, first, these two waters entering it, and then the central channel dividing into the Tigris and Euphrates. Settlers always ascend rivers from the

[1] It was first advanced by Rask, in Illgen's *Zeitschrift für die historische Theologie*, vol. vi. pp. 94 ff.

sea, he tells us, and those from whom first Abraham and then Moses derived the tradition, must have done so. The word Pison, he adds, means the Leaper,[1] and this exactly suits the Karun, which rushes step by step from four different mountain levels, and thus may well be called the Cataract Stream. The word Gihon he agrees with Dillmann in translating the Breaker-through, and finds it precisely indicating the characteristics of the Kertha, which "breaks through the mountains and descents of Laristan by wild clefts and cross valleys with a thousand windings." The four regions named in the Mosaic account, Eden, Havilah, Ethiopia or Cush, and Assyria, are all found in the vicinity of this district. Cush is identified with the present Khuzistan, which borders the Schatt el Arab, and is watered by both the Karun and the Kertha. He says, with great force, that though the name Cush was doubtless applied in after ages to the regions south of Egypt and to Arabia, the account of Eden must refer to its first application, when the progenitors of the Cushites still lived in their original homes. Havilah,[2] the Sandland, — that is, apparently, the Gold-sandland,—he thinks must have been the district afterwards known as Elymais or Susiana, which is close to the region he favours. Eden, as the name of a country, he supposes to have been Mesopotamia, and from all this, he concludes, that the now swampy lowlands at the mouth

[1] Dillmann translates it, "The Broad-flowing."

[2] Gen. x. 29, has the name Havilah as the district of an Arab stock sprung from Joktan. In Gen. xxv. 18, it is said to be the eastern boundary of the Ishmaelites, instead of whom the Amalekites are named in 1 Sam. xv. 7. Niebuhr found a name very like it in these parts. There is another Havilah mentioned (Gen. x. 7; 1 Chron. i. 9) among the sons of Cush, which points to South Arabia or Ethiopia. There is a place known to the ancients as Avalitæ, on the Abyssinian coast, below Bab el Mandeb.

of the united Euphrates and Tigris, were, certainly, the site of Paradise.[1] Unfortunately for this hypothesis, Sir Henry Rawlinson tells us[2] that the delta of the Schatt el Arab advances at the rate of an English mile in sixty-six years, and must have grown in early ages at the rate of a mile in half that time, which would imply the addition of from 150 to 200 miles of land to the locality since the days of Adam. Latest among the opinions advanced on this curious subject are those of Professor Friedrich Delitzsch, a great Assyrian authority. He tells us that Eden was a Babylonian district, from about Tekrit, on the Tigris, and Ana, on the Euphrates, to the Persian Gulf, but Schrader, an equally high authority, questions this. Professor Delitzsch, moreover, finds the rivers of Eden in the rivers and canals of Babylonia. Two of them were the Euphrates and the Tigris, while Pishon is a Babylonian word, meaning "a canal," and Gihon may be the Accadian word "Gukhan," the stream on which Babylon stood.

Traditions of a primitive state of innocence reflect in every age and nation the truth of the narrative of Genesis. They date, in fact, from before the separation of mankind into different races, all countries evidently drawing them from a common source. Coloured by local surroundings, national history, and heathenism, the story of a happy past, when "men, as yet without any evil passions, passed their lives without reproach and crimes, and therefore without punishments and restraints," has everywhere been

[1] Paradise means a place fenced round; and hence, a park, a garden with trees. The pleasure grounds and gardens of the Persian kings were called "Paradises." Xenophon describes one belonging to them as a garden very large and beautiful, having all things which the seasons produce. *Anab.*, iv. 10.

[2] *Journal of the Geographical Society*, vol. xxvii. p. 186.

cherished by mankind.[1] The ancient Egyptians looked back on the terrestrial reign of the god Ra, as a time of such purity and happiness, that they were wont to speak of anything especially perfect, as having been unequalled since the days of that god. Before the separation of the Aryan and Semitic races, the belief was common to both that the first age of humanity was one of innocence and bliss. The Aryans, indeed, developed this belief, in a way peculiar to them, into a tradition of successive ages of decreasing purity and happiness. Thus, in India, they held that the course of the world, which was to last for 4,320,000 years, was pre-ordained to exhibit—first, the age of perfection; then, that of threefold sacrifice, when all religious duties were faultlessly performed; next, that of doubt and religious decline; and lastly, our own, that of perdition, with which the earth is to come to an end.[2] The Greeks had their successive ages of gold, silver, iron, and brass; and the Persians, also, had the same idea, in another form. The world, with them, is to last 12,000 years, divided into four periods of 3,000 each. Of these, the first was all pure; in the second, evil appears and declares war against good, in a struggle which is to last till the whole drama closes. But in all these conceptions there is a marked contrast with the narrative of Scripture, for in all, alike, corruption grows by a fell necessity, through mere continuance. Born of the light, the universe grows darker the farther it recedes from it. Evil is not a matter of choice, but a decree of fate.

The trees of life, and of the knowledge of good and evil, have been no less widely remembered. The Indian tradi-

[1] Tac., *Ann.*, iii. 26.
[2] *Laws of Menu*, vol. i. pp. 68-86.

tion speaks of the tree Kalpanksham, whose fruit gave immortality; among the Persians a similar tree was called Hom; among the Arabs, the Tuba; among the Greeks, the Lotus. On the Assyrian sculptures the tree of life is constantly seen; sometimes alone, sometimes worshipped by royal figures, at others guarded by winged forms in an attitude of adoration; but always incontrovertibly as one of the loftiest of religious emblems, for we often see it surmounted by the winged disk, the symbolic image of the Supreme God, with occasionally a human bust above all. Alike on the bas-reliefs of Assyrian palaces, and on both Babylonian and Assyrian cylinders, it recurs with striking constancy.

All the traditions of Paradise, in every country, introduce this mysterious appearance. Those of India speak of four such trees on the four corners of Mount Meru; the ancient Persians have sometimes a single tree springing from the midst of a holy spring in Paradise, and sometimes two, corresponding exactly to those in Eden. The most ancient name of Babylon, in the idiom of the first dwellers in that region, was "The place of the tree of life,"[1] and even on the coffins of enamelled clay, of a date later than Alexander the Great, found at Warka, the ancient Erech, this tree appears as the emblem of immortality. Strange to say, one picture of it on an ancient Assyrian relic, has been found drawn with sufficient accuracy to enable us to recognize it as the plant known as the Soma tree to the Aryans of India, and the Homa of the ancient Persians, the crushed branches of which yielded a draught offered as a libation to the gods, as the water of immortality. In Egypt the tree of life is seldom seen ex-

[1] Lenormant, *Contemp. Rev.* (Sept., 1879), p. 155.

cept on funeral monuments, and is always planted beside "the water of life": a Divine form always appearing in the bosom of the tree, pouring out this water of immortality to souls, personified by birds with human heads.

The Fall in all its details finds an echo in every religion of the world. Yeina, the first man in Aryan tradition, passed his life in a state of bliss, till he committed the sin which weighs on his descendants, and for this he was driven out of Paradise after being a thousand years in it, and was given up to the dominion of the Serpent, who finally brought about his death by horrible torments.[1] In one of the oldest portions of the sacred scriptures of Zoroastrianism, the good god, Ahuramazda, speaks of his having created man perfect, in "the best of dwelling places," and of the evil spirits having formed, out of the river and winter, the murderous Serpent, man's destroyer.[2] A later, but still primitive, variation of this tradition describes man as created holy, and destined to immortal happiness, if he continued pure in thought, word, and deed, and humble in heart. At first he remained true to God, but, later, falsehood ran through his thoughts; for the evil spirit, the Serpent, seduced first the woman and then the man, to believe that they were indebted for all their blessings, not to God but to him. Having thus led them astray, the deceiver grew more bold, and presented himself a second time, *bringing them fruits, by eating which they lost all the hundred blessings they had had, save one*, and were wicked and unhappy. And now, having ere long discovered fire, by Divine revelation, they offered the first sacrifice of a

[1] F. Lenormant, *Contemp. Rev.* (Sept., 1879), p. 152

[2] *Vendidad*, vol. i. pp. 5–8.

sheep, and began to eat flesh, and to clothe themselves with the skins of the creatures they killed, and to make garments of their hair.[1] The Edda of Snorro Sturleson tells how the immortal Idhunna lived with Bragi, the first of the skalds or minstrels, in Asgard, a paradise in the centre of the earth, pure and innocent. The gods had entrusted him with the guardianship of the apples of immortality; but Loki, the deceiver, the author of all evil, seduced her by other apples, which he said he had discovered in the woods. Idhunna followed him to gather them, but she was suddenly carried off by a giant, and there was no more joy in Asgard. The Thibetian legend is no less striking. The first men were, it tells us, perfect like the gods, but they grew corrupt when they ate of the white sugar-sweet Schima tree. Hunger came, and the brightness of their faces vanished. They had had wings before, but these withered away. Men were henceforth chained to the earth, and their lives were shortened.

Even the prediction of the crushing of the head of the serpent has perpetuated itself in the traditions of mankind. Among the Egyptians the serpent Assap fights against the sun and moon, but is pierced through by Horus. Pherecides of Syros borrowed from the Phœnicians an account of a great man-serpent hurled into Tartarus, together with his companions, by the god Kronos (El), who triumphed over him at the beginning of things. It was under the form of a great serpent that the evil spirit, in the ancient Persian religion, after having tried to corrupt heaven, leaped upon the earth, where Mithra, god of the pure sky, fought with him while still in this shape. It is under this form, moreover, that he is finally to be conquered and

[1] *Zendavesta*, in Rosenmüller's *Das Alte und Neue Morgenland*, vol. i. p. 13.

chained for 3,000 years, and at the end of the world burned up with molten metals.[1]

Nor did such traditions confine themselves to the East. We find traces of them in ancient Roman sculptures. One famous sarcophagus in the museum of the Capitol shows a man and woman, naked, standing at the foot of a tree, from which the man is about to take some fruit, while the demon who has tempted him is standing near. On an ancient Roman bas-relief, again, a huge serpent is seen coiled around the trunk of a tree, beneath which a man and woman, in primitive nakedness, are standing. That the dim perpetuation of the old Bible story was common

AN EGYPTIAN GODDESS PIERCING THE SERPENT'S HEAD.

From *Wilkinson*, vol. v. plate 42.

THE INDIAN GOD KRISHNA CRUSHING THE SERPENT'S HEAD.

From Coleman's *Indian Mythology*, p. 34.

even to the Canaanites has, moreover, lately been strikingly shown by a curious painted vase of Phœnician manufacture of the sixth or seventh century B.C., discovered in

[1] For the religion of the ancient Persians, see Dr. Justi's *Geschichte des Alten Persiens*, passim.

one of the most ancient sepulchres of Cyprus.[1] It exhibits a leafy tree, from the branches of which hang two large clusters of fruit, while a great serpent is advancing with an undulating motion towards the tree, and rearing itself to seize its fruit. In a Scandinavian legend, Thor, the first-born of the highest God, a mediator between Him and men, fights with death, and in the struggle is thrown on his knees; but he breaks the head of the great serpent with his club, and finally tramples it under foot and slays it, though at the price of his own life.[2] So, in the oldest Hindoo temples, two figures of Krishna are still seen, in one of which he is trampling on the crushed head of the serpent, while in the other the serpent clings round him and bites his heel.[3]

Assyria, also, has yielded its tribute to these primeval echoes of the Fall. Among the relics brought to England

SACRED TREE, WITH A SEATED FIGURE ON EACH SIDE, AND A SERPENT IN THE BACKGROUND.

From an early Babylonian Cylinder.

by Layard is an ancient Babylonian cylinder, on which is a design representing, in the centre, a tree with horizontal branches, with two bunches of fruit hanging down, while

[1] Lenormant, *Contemp. Rev.* (Sept., 1879), p. 155.
[2] *Edda*, Fab. ii. 25, 27, 32.
[3] Maurice's *History of Hindostan*, vol. ii. p. 290.

on each side, respectively, sit a man and a woman; the former with the horns of an ox; the latter with simply a head-dress, but behind her is a serpent, erect. It is impossible in looking at this not to think of the Bible story of the temptation of Adam and Eve, or to doubt that though, unfortunately, the Chaldæan narrative of the Fall has not yet been recovered, it formed part of the traditions of the country, or that the serpent was recognized, in at least one form of the legend, as the agent in the catastrophe. The dragon Tiamat—the personification of the Tehōm of the Hebrews—the abyss of chaos, and, thus, of darkness and disorder, and the powers of evil, is, indeed, the counterpart of the serpent of Genesis, and is, virtually, "the wicked serpent," "the serpent of night" and of "darkness," who, in their legends, brought about the Fall of Man.

A vivid description of a great struggle between this monster and the great god Marduk, or Merodach, sent by his brother god to seek out and slay this terrible dragon, is fortunately preserved in the great Assyrian epic of Creation, of which it forms the subject of the fourth tablet. Armed with a club and bow, and with a weapon peculiar to him, hanging at his back, he engages in fierce fight with Tiamat, and eventually, after thrusting a storm-wind down its throat, dashes out the brains of the dragon, a particular which at once calls to recollection "the bruising of the serpent's head." There is, however, this noteworthy difference between the Babylonian and the Scriptural accounts. Tiamat is a sea-monster, the sea being regarded, apparently, as a great hostile power, and hence associated with darkness and evil, and it is, moreover, a dragon, a composite creature; not a serpent. The conflict, however, both in the cuneiform text and as depicted on Babylonian

seals, always takes place on the land. It is represented on a large scale on a bas-relief, in the Assyrian Gallery of the British Museum. The awful Tiamat is seen retreating, but still threatening, with claws and widely-opened mouth. He has a pair of wings and a scale-covered body, a short tail, and horns on his head. Merodach is advancing to the attack. He has two pairs of wings, and is brandishing a pair of double tridents which possibly represent lightning. On some Babylonian seals, on the other hand, he is represented either equipped and ready for the conflict, or attacking the dragon with bow and club.

That the sacred tree of Assyria is sometimes guarded by genii is an additional coincidence with the Bible narrative, which tells us of God's placing Cherubim "before" Eden, "and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." These mysterious beings are often mentioned in Scripture. They covered the mercy seat with their outspread wings; they were represented on the walls of the Holy of Holies, in the Temple of Solomon, and they appear in the vision of Ezekiel. The tradition of their presence in Eden impressed itself deeply on the popular mind in Assyria, re-appearing age after age in such forms as the winged bulls with human faces, sometimes found in the Assyrian sculptures on each side of the tree of life, and which, also, guarded the gates to the royal palaces to prevent evil spirits from entering. "The watchful bull which protects the strength of my kingdom and the glory of my honour," says Asarhaddon, in an inscription which refers to one of them. Nor is it less striking that they bear the very name of Cherubim, or Kerubi; even the gates which they watched coming in the end to be similarly called: the word being taken from a root which

means "to approach" or "be near," so that it probably implied one who was allowed to stand near God. That the Cherubim were regarded as at least symbols of mysterious higher existences, able to protect and preserve what was put under their care, is evident from their place being sometimes occupied by known divinities, and by the fact that a bas-relief, representing the erection of one, under the direction of King Sennacherib, bears on it, after the divine symbol, the words, "the bull," "the god."[1]

A strange reminiscence of these mysterious forms occurs in the legend of Gis-dubar, the Sun-hero, who is represented under the autumn and winter signs, as weak and sinking to his death, beneath the dark winter-clouds of the north. Wandering vainly in search of immortality, he comes to the mountains of the Land of Masu, and there encounters strange cherubic guardians of "the Gates of the Sun." They were scorpion-men, whose heads towered to the dome of heaven, while their feet rested in the gloom of the dark land of the Shadow of Death. "Their terribleness was consuming, their aspect death." Beyond them lay a beautiful garden, which they kept him from entering—a garden the trees of which were "like the trees of the gods; with emeralds for fruit, and leaves of glittering crystal, pleasant to the sight." He is kept by them from approaching the tree of life, where he might restore his sick and declining frame.[2]

Outside the gates guarded by these awful beings, the earth was cursed and desert. The doom pronounced on it by the offended gods runs: "I will look to curse the people; in their stomach let famine dwell. Let not the

[1] Lenormant's *Berose*, pp. 80, 135. *Les Origines de l'Histoire*, pp. 109-117.
[2] *Bab. and Orient. Record*, vol. iii. p. 146.

floods be carried in the canals. Let the inundations withdraw from the fields. Let the corn give no increase, let blackness overspread it. Let the ploughed land bring forth thorns. Let the growth of fruit perish, let food not come forth from it, and let bread not be produced. Let distress spread over the people. May mercy cease and good not be given." [1]

The flaming sword of which Moses speaks as in the hands of the Cherubim has often exercised the ingenuity of scholars, but it must, we fear, remain for ever a mystery. Could it be the lightning which we see represented in Assyrian sculptures as held by the god Bin, the deity of the air, in the form of a flame spoken of as "a sword of fire"? An old Accadian fragment, translated by Lenormant, perhaps assists a judgment—a nameless god boasting in it, with high exultation, of possessing a sword formed of seven rays of fire, shooting out into a revolving circle of fifty tongues of flame. A translation of this curious legend has been published, and furnishes matter so interesting that a short extract may be useful.

> In my right hand I hold my disk of fire,[2]
> In my left I grasp my disk of slaughter.
> The sun with fifty faces . . . a sun which never turns back—
> The mighty weapon which, like a sword, devours in a circle
> The bodies of my enemies,—
> The weapon that breaks the mountains . . .

[1] Sayce's *Chaldæan Genesis*, 187.

[2] The "disk of fire" appears to be a poetical name for lightning, derived from familiarity with some weapon like the Schakra of Indian mythology—a circular weapon edged with sharp swords, which was made to whirl rapidly, and thrown out before the warrior who used it, and then pulled back to be hurled out again. A reminiscence of this primeval weapon seems to have survived till late years, in the use by the Sikhs, of sharp-edged quoits, thrown with great force and precision of aim against their foes, in battle. The Sikh regiments in the British army still bear the harmless imitation of this strange weapon on their full-dress turbans.

The flaming blade of battle, which wastes the rebellious land,
The great sword which overthrows the ranks of the valiant.

Such were the legends of Western Asia, but those of the east and of the central plains were no less striking. Heavenly beings, armed with the lightnings, guard the Soma tree of Indian fable ; and on the steppes of Asia, the Tartars, in keeping with their pastoral habits, believe that there is, somewhere, a grass known as the grass of life, which is protected by a supernatural being on horseback.[1]

Nor are such illustrations of the external facts of the Bible narrative the only echoes of Paradise which lingered among mankind. The existence and origin of evil were a special theme of ancient poets and philosophers. The Greeks especially, among Western nations, delighted to dwell on the subject.

Thus Hesiod, in the 9th or 8th century before Christ, tells us that men at first lived happy, free from toil and sickness, or evils of any kind.

Lo, at first, lived the race of earth-tilling men
Kept far from suffering or from weary toil,
And from sad disease which brings death to mankind,
For trouble makes mortals grow early old.[2]

Plenty and contentment filled their souls, amidst their easily-gained though simple living.

Easily, then, would they do in one day the work
Which now needs a full year, and that often profitless ;
Soon then rested the helm of the boat over the hearth,
And brief were the toils of the ox and the load-bearing mule.

[1] Weber's *Ind. Stud.*, vol. ii. p. 313.

[2] Works and Days, lines 90 93. The other quotations are lines 43–46, 47, 55 58, 101–104. The Bible, it will be noticed, differs in its story of the Fall from all heathen traditions, in leaving absolute moral freedom to man, and with it responsibility and power of restoration ; whereas, outside its statements there is nothing but fatal destiny, destructive of all true morality.

But this state did not continue long. Prometheus deceives Jupiter, the father of gods and mortals, and as a punishment on the human race, fire is hidden from them. But Prometheus, whose offence, like that of the sons of Eli at Shiloh, was taking for common use some of the flesh and fat of sacred offerings, dexterously discovers the fire, and takes it away, unknown to the Thunderer, in the hollow of a staff, and gives it to man. Then Jupiter threatens him.

> Thou art glad to have snatched away the fire and deceived me ;
> Look then for woe on thyself and the future generations of men.
> I give them with fire a curse, in which all
> Shall rejoice in their hearts, embracing the evil I send.

He now sends Pandora, the first woman, formed by Hephaistos, and presented by each of the gods with a gift. Epimetheus, forgetful of the warning of his brother, Prometheus, never to take a gift from Jupiter, takes a casket he gives, opens the lid, and forthwith all the evils of man's lot fly out.

> The earth around is full of evil, and so is the wide sea.
> Diseases as well, by day and also by night,
> Approach unbidden and bring evils to mortals.
> They come still and softly, for Zeus Kronion has made them dumb.

Only Hope remains behind in the casket ; Pandora, at the counsel of Jupiter, having closed the lid before this also flew out. And now the poet closes the pitiful story by the moral :

> Thus it is permitted to none to escape Jove's ruling power.

In the Theogony of Hesiod, this relation is expanded and modified, adding the terrible punishment inflicted on Prometheus, and his deliverance, but the moral is the same

as in the "Works and Days." "No one can escape the ordinances of Jupiter or circumvent them." Æschylus, in his "Prometheus Bound," gives, in the fifth century before Christ, a later expression of Greek thought on the same themes. Men at first, in his idea, were wretched, living in caves, and ignorant even of the course of the seasons. Prometheus raises them from this degradation, from foolish love to man and bold defiance of the gods. Jupiter is the enemy of our race: he their friend. His theft of fire from heaven is their salvation, for all the arts and comforts of life spring from it; but he has to bear untold sufferings on account of it—sufferings, nevertheless, ultimately removed. How they were so is, however, left to another tragedy, now unfortunately lost.

The resemblances between these highest expressions of the thought of antiquity, echoing in their own way primitive tradition, show striking similarities in their leading features to the Old Testament narrative. Both paint the original state of man as one of freedom from all suffering, through happy contentment and unbroken peace with God; both account for the origin of evil and the consequent loss of man's first estate; both link its entrance on our world with an act of disobedience towards the Godhead, and ascribe its committal to the agency of woman. The Old Testament says that through eating the forbidden fruit man became like God, in the knowledge of good and evil; the Greeks, that the act which brought sorrow into the world was also the opening of a new and higher era of knowledge: the exchange of a childlike state for a more complete one.

The contrasts, however, are still more striking than the resemblances. Genesis portrays God as the One only self-

existent and independent: the universe as the creation absolutely under His control; sin as a voluntary transgression of His law, which itself, as a reflection of His nature, is holy, just, and good. The Greek mind sees in Jupiter a being who, while supreme as regards man, is himself controlled by fate: one who acts by tyrannical caprice, wholly dissociated from moral considerations. It sees in the world a self-existent, and therefore partly independent, rival to him, and in sin a misfortune rather than a fault. "The Fall," to the Greek, is a struggle of violence and craft between man and the Godhead, in which the latter conquers, as it were by accident, and, at most, by outward power. In the Old Testament, sin is the unholy opposition of the creature to the Holy Creator; of the absolutely dependent to the absolutely Independent. Elohim sits throned in unapproachable power, wisdom, and holiness; the Law-giver, the Judge, the Punisher of man—the guilty transgressor, created sufficient to have stood, but free to fall, and choosing of his free will to sin.[1] In the Bible, moreover, the spectacle is presented from the first, of the continued rise of man from the ruin of his early sin. In paganism we have the golden age surely darkening into that of iron.

The highest flights of human speculation are represented by the Greek conceptions, but we feel at once how immeasurably they fall below the simple but divine philosophy of Genesis—the legacy of a race to whom abstract speculation was unknown; a race which accepted without question, as final truths, what its prophets and holy men received by inspiration. How comes it, to use the words

[1] See a fine article by Dr. G. Baur, on *Die Alttestamentliche und die Griechische Vorstellung vom Sündenfalle. Studien und Kritiken* (1848), pp. 321-368.

of J. G. Fichte, who certainly had no undue leaning towards revelation, that "The ancient and venerable record," in which we find the Hebrew teachings, "taken altogether, contains the profoundest and the loftiest wisdom, and presents those results to which all philosophy must at last return"? What answer can be given except that God Himself is its Author?

CHAPTER VIII.

SCIENTIFIC TEACHING ON THE ORIGIN AND ANTIQUITY OF MAN.

THE chronology of Scripture, till it falls into that of profane history, has always been a difficult and much-disputed question. That of the Hebrew text gives a period of 2,021 years from the creation to the journey of Abraham to Canaan; while the Samaritan Pentateuch makes it 2,322 years; and the Greek Bible, 3,507.[1]

The whole subject of numbers and dates in connection with the Old Testament is, in fact, a difficult one, partly from the fact that the sacred writers speak of descendants of a given progenitor as his sons, in accordance with Eastern custom, and partly, perhaps, from the use of letters for figures in the early manuscripts.[2] The Jews did this even after the exile, and it is not improbable that their forefathers did the same, like the Greeks, who borrowed their alphabet from the Phœnicians,—a people related to the Hebrews,—and used letters for figures from the earliest times. The mistake by copyists, of letters resembling each other, while of very different numerical value, accounts for many difficulties. It would be easy, for instance, to exchange ג (3) for ז (7), or פ (80) for כ

[1] The Rabbinical year now in use among the Jews gives a fourth estimate; for A.D. 1900 is by it the year of the world 5740.

[2] Eichhorn's *Einleitung*, i. § 90. Winer, *Realwörterbuch*, art. "Zahlen." Gesenius, *Heb. Grammar*, 20th ed. § 5.

(20), or מ (40) with ם (60), or ה (5) with ת (400), or א (1) with אּ (1,000). The contractions and cramped writing of existing manuscripts, indeed, often make their decipherment difficult even now, and increase the liability to mistakes in copying. But how great must have been the risk of error on such minute points in the countless transcriptions of thousands of years, especially if we remember that two small dots above the first nine letters raised them from units to thousands?

Under these circumstances it is not wonderful that chronologists have produced very different reckonings in every age. In the French book, *L'Art de Verifier les Dates,* no fewer than 108 opinions are given respecting the period from Adam to Christ, varying more than 2,000 years in their extremes. Des Vignolles says, indeed,[1] that he had collected 200, the highest of which reckoned the same period at 6,984 years, while in the lowest it was put at 3,483. The chronology followed in our English Bibles is that of Archbishop Usher,[2] according to which the world will be 5,904 years old in A.D. 1900, but it is needless to say that the worthy Irishman would have been the last to have claimed inspiration for his estimates. One thing in their favour, however, is that Ideler, the great German scholar, accepted them with an addition of only two years up to the birth of Christ.

Various systems have at different times had great celebrity. Thus, Panodorus, an Alexandrian monk who lived about A.D. 412, fixed the year of Christ's birth as the 5493d from the creation of the world,[3] and this reckon-

[1] In the preface to his *Chronologie de l'Histoire Sainte*, quoted by Ideler.

[2] 1580–1656. Usher was Archbishop of Armagh.

[3] Ideler, *Handbuch der Chronologie*, vol. ii. p. 447. Wieseler, art. "Aere," Herzog *Real-Encyklopädie*, vol. i. p. 153.

ing was long used in the Church for the festivals of the ecclesiastical year. Two other calculations are still in use among single Christian nations. That of Anianus, an Egyptian monk, a contemporary of Panodorus, who sets Christ's birth in the year of the world 5501, is still employed by the Abyssinians. The Greek-Christian races, on the other hand, with the exception of the Russians, use the Constantinopolitan system, according to which the year begins on the 1st of September, and Christ's birth is put in the year 5509. Julius Africanus calculated the year 5500; Eusebius, the Venerable Bede, and the Romish Martyrology, the year 5199; Scaliger and Calvisius the year 3950, and Kepler and Petavius, the year 3984, as that of the nativity. These dates, varying and arbitrary as they seem, have been, among others, the materials of which Church historians and chronologists, not only of the earlier ages, but even since the Reformation, have constantly made use.[1]

To show at a glance the different ideas of the period assigned by Genesis as that of the creation of man, by these and other calculations, famous in their day, and in some cases in wide use even at present, it may be interesting to note the following table:

	From Creation to A.D. 1900.
Zunz (Hebrew reckoning)	5888
Septuagint (Perowne)	7261 or 7311
Rabbinical	5660
Usher	5904
Panodorus	7393
Anianus	7401[2]
Constantinopolitan	7409

[1] The whole question of these eras of the world will be found treated with great learning in Ideler, vol. ii. pp. 444–470.

[2] *Wieseler:* Ideler says, 7392.

	From Creation to A.D. 1900.
Eusebius	7099
Scaliger	5850
Dionysius (from whom we take *our* Christian era)	7394
Maximus	7401
Syncellus and Theophanes	7401
Julius Africanus	7401
Hales	7231
Jackson	7326

It is thus clear that it has been at all times an open question among the most orthodox theologians, whether Scripture assigned the creation of man to a nearer or remoter date.[1] Of the calculations above given, nine fix it at over 7,000 years ago, and four more or less under 6,000. There can be no ground for dogmatizing where doctors differ so strikingly, for he would be a bold man who would impugn the soundness of the worthies who offer even the highest computations quoted. Others might indeed have been added of hardly less weight, for it is not to be forgotten that two hundred different calculations, at least, exist, varying, to the present date, from 8,863 years to 5,362.

It is worthy of notice, moreover, that even the separate parts of Biblical calculations are differently computed by different authorities. Thus, to instance the case of the Septuagint alone, Dean Perowne[2] differs 18 and 98 years,

[1] The chronology of Berosus has been thought to ascribe a length of 43,000 years to each of the ten Babylonian kings, from the *sare* being reckoned at 3,600 years. But a passage in Suidas claims that this was the astronomical *sare*, and that there was another of only 18 months, used for civil purposes. According to this, the length of the ten reigns is 2,221 years, or 21 years less than the period given in the Septuagint as having elapsed between Creation and the Deluge. See Vigouroux, *La Bible et les Découvertes Modernes*, vol. i. p. 214. See also Lenormant, *Les Origines de l'Histoire* (Paris, 1880), p. 279.

[2] *Dictionary of the Bible*, art. "Chronology."

respectively, from Bunsen, in his reckoning of the interval from the Creation to Abraham leaving Haran, while as to the numbers through the rest of the Old Testament, either in the Hebrew or the Greek, each investigator adopts his own method of analysis, and draws his own conclusions. The progress of Assyrian studies will perhaps enable future scholars to solve the difficulties which have hitherto perplexed so many, by furnishing fixed periods from which to start and by which to check their results; but till this is the case, Biblical chronology will be by no means a subject on which all are united. Meanwhile it is well to remember that the chronology given on the margin of our Bibles is of no authority and of great uncertainty.

It is one of the healthiest signs of the present day that all questions are treated as open to calm and serious investigation, however long and generally they may have been regarded as settled. The search for truth is the noblest occupation of the mind or heart, and as such must be preeminently an impulse from Him who made us as we are. To deserve our homage it needs, however, to be reverent; anxious to establish, not to destroy; patient in observation and research; and slow to admit conclusions which overthrow accepted opinions. It does not, of course, follow that because a belief is of long standing it is right; but respect for our fellows, the modesty of true science, and the presumption in favour of hereditary conviction, demand the most diffident humility in its examination.

To a large extent this is shown by our men of science; but the charm of a supposed new discovery, the tendency to see facts in the light of preconceived notions, and the rareness of the philosophical power to gather a sufficient basis of facts before generalizing, tend not seldom to

induce a hastiness in advancing new theories, which has at least an air of rashness.

In no direction has this been more noticeable of late years than in the speculations so much in vogue respecting the origin and the antiquity of man; for while some, like Dr. Darwin, have borne themselves with a modesty and ardent desire for truth which disarm personal feeling, even where the opinions advanced are most distasteful, others have been restrained by no self-distrustful humility, but have rivalled Oscar Schmidt, who supplies a genealogical tree, showing the descent of mankind from creatures on the level of the Ornithorhynchus of Australia.[1] In the same way some have hinted rather than asserted the immense antiquity of mankind, while others have dogmatized on the subject in a manner that is almost amusing. "Man," says M. Lalande, "is eternal."[2] "The Aryans," says M. Piétrement, "had tamed the horse and used it habitually at an epoch anterior to the year 19,337 before the Christian era."[3]

But while extravagances like these deserve no serious notice, the conclusion of scientific men generally, on the evidence gradually accumulated, shows an unusually wide agreement in the belief that man has been much longer in existence than has, till recent years, been fancied. Reconciliation of this with the supposed teaching of Genesis has been proposed, in some cases, by the theory that there must have been a race of men before Adam, not mentioned

[1] Schmidt, *The Doctrine of Descent and Darwinism*, p. 270. The slightness of the grounds on which some wild geological theories are based, through the tendency of average scientific men to adopt blindly the hints of superior minds, and carry them out to rash lengths, is well shown in an able book, *Scepticism in Geology* (London: Murray, 1874).

[2] Congrès Univ., 1867, *Compte Rendu*, p. 423.

[3] *Les Origines du Cheval domestique*, p. 280.

in Scripture, or by the less conceivable supposition that Adam was, indeed, created at the geological period ascribed by scientific men to the appearance of our race on the earth, but that this period, after all, was of very recent date. It is conceded, by those who advance this idea, that mankind existed at the close of the ages known as the Glacial Period, when a vast sheet of ice—like that which, in our own day, buries Greenland and makes its vast surface impassable and uninhabitable except along the edge of the sea—stretched over a great part of the northern hemisphere; and the surface of Southern Europe and Northern Africa was so much greater than at present, that the Mediterranean consisted of two parts: the eastern, shrunk into modest limits, which, on the north, joined Cyprus to Asia Minor; blotted out the Greek Archipelago, adding it and Crete to the mainland; left no Adriatic, but joined Italy and Sicily to North Africa; leaving the coast to sweep along, on the south, in a line with Sicily, eastwards, through its whole length, and finally, bending northwards far out from the present coast of Palestine, so that wide regions, since covered by the sea, extended from that country towards the west; the rich and beautiful hunting grounds of primeval man! Nor was Europe at large less different from what it is now, for great ice fields existed during the long ages of Ice, where now there are none, covering most, or, perhaps, all the hillier regions, so that the snow fields and glaciers existing now in countries like Norway and Switzerland, or, on a small scale, in the Pyrenees, are only the insignificant successors of mighty ice-sheets which have long since melted away.[1]

These tremendous contrasts to the existing state of

[1] Geikie's *Great Ice Age*, 401.

things are frankly granted by all geologists; but one, at least, in his creditable zeal to harmonize what he conceives to be the teaching of Genesis with the existence of man in a world so different, has met the difficulty by claiming that two or three thousand years before the Flood of Noah will be a remote enough date for them, while the vast elevations and subsidences required to change the face of the earth to its present outlines may have been caused by the convulsions attending the Deluge. It is surely, however, a great strain on our faith to ask that we should believe that an almost Arctic climate was changed into the climates of the present day in two or three thousand years, by natural causes, or that a Flood which could leave a fragile twig on an olive-tree was yet so terrific in the convulsions attending it as to engulf immense regions and remodel the map of the world. Especially wild as a whole, the speculation is still more so when examined in detail. How does it agree with Genesis to represent Adam and his early posterity as "the men of the river caves and gravels": naked savages living in the rudest degradation, with caverns for dwellings, and rude flint weapons their only inventions; ignorant of agriculture or pastoral life; as low, in fact, in the scale of civilization, as the storm-beaten natives of Terra del Fuego? And how does it agree with the Hebrew narrative to ascribe to the agency of the Flood the formation of the vast beds of drift found over widely distant parts of every continent, in some cases at the height of a mile above the present sea level, when we read of the Ark resting quietly on the waters, and find that when they were withdrawn, the landscapes that had been submerged remained undisturbed even in trifling details?[1]

[1] Dawson's *Modern Science in Bible Lands*, 176–244.

As to the length of time during which man has lived on the earth, scientific men, as we have seen, differ greatly. Some speak of him as already existing in what are called the Miocene Ages, a period immensely remote, but the weightiest authorities slight such fancies as without any basis of evidence. That he had appeared before the close of the great Ice Age is, however, held as indisputable by the scientific world generally. To this period our own may be regarded as, at a long remove, the successor: abundant proof lying on every hand that the transition from the Arctic cold of this dismal time has been brought about only by the slow action of natural causes. Geologists tell us that the Ice Age was itself marked by great changes of climate, involving a period of vast duration. Cold ages prevailed at one time, warm ages at another, in slow alternation. In the former, Arctic-alpine vegetation and northern forms of life filled the gloomy landscape even in what are now temperate latitudes; in the latter, these regions were the home of southern and temperate life, both animal and vegetable. In the cold ages the reindeer, glutton, mammoth, Arctic fox, and other creatures equally characteristic of cold climates, lived even in Southern Europe, but during the genial periods, between successive ages of cold, the hippo-campus, rhinoceros, elephant, and the like lived in England, North Germany, and similar latitudes. The first race of men, it is held, by what we must call the Moderate School, as distinct from Extremists, was contemporary with all these animals, whether representatives of a cold or warm climate, which would carry back the appearance of our race very far indeed. Not being a geologist, I only state the conclusions of the scientific world, as in duty bound, without any attempt at an opinion respecting them, though

the concurrence of so many trained observers naturally carries with it great weight.

In opposition to all estimates of the high antiquity of mankind many arguments are advanced, of which a brief summary may help to furnish materials for decision on one side or the other. The evidence of deposits in caves; of discoveries in river and other gravels; of fen-beds; of the geographical changes of localities since the date of the early human remains found in them, and that of the presence of extinct mammals, in many places, with these remains, are urged, with many startling details, in support of the remote existence of our race.[1] It is singular and instructive in many ways, after studying this side of the case, to turn to the grounds given for an opposite opinion. Each, heard alone, seems conclusive, but space forbids more than a short illustration of the facts alleged by those who cling to the recent origin of our race. Thus, while it is asserted on the one hand that it takes 5,000 years to create an inch of lime-deposit on the floor of Kent's Cavern,[2] others maintain that elsewhere it is formed at the rate of the third of an inch a year,[3] which would give a foot in depth in about the third of a century. A copper plate of the twelfth or thirteenth century, we are told, was found in a cave at Gibraltar, under eighteen inches of stalagmite.[4] At Knaresboro', objects are incrusted with similar calcareous deposit so quickly, that, as is well known, a trade in them is briskly kept up. In Italy, the waters of the baths of San Filippo have been known to deposit a solid mass of it, thirty feet thick, in twenty years.[5] It is thus clear that the rate of

[1] Sir Richard Owen, *Pall Mall Gazette*, 7th November, 1889.
[2] *Manchester Scientific Lectures* (1873–4), p. 130.
[3] Mr. Boyd Dawkins, *Athenæum* (April 12th, 1873).
[4] Southall's *Recent Origin of Man*, p. 221.
[5] *Ibid.*

deposit depends on circumstances. One condition of the surface may supply acids, from decaying vegetation, for example, which may dissolve the limestone much faster than another.

The evidence deduced from river and other gravels and drifts is as much questioned.[1] It is indeed often impossible to fix their age either from their depth or their contents. Mr. Wood found the road leading to the Temple of Diana, at Ephesus, more than four yards below the present surface, and he obtained remains of colossal sculptures, at the Temple itself, from a depth of six yards and a half. Local floods work great changes, and it is to be remembered that all rivers are much larger in a country still in a state of nature than when human settlement has in great measure drained off the surface waters. The shifting of river beds themselves works great changes. M. de Rossi thinks that the beds of drift in the course of the Tiber are not older than the Roman Republic. M. Chabas, in a close examination of the tool-bearing drifts of Northern France, found that, at one part, bits of Roman pottery, at another, a copper coin of Charles VIII. of France, at a third, pieces of yellow brick, were as deep in the soil as the stone axes, etc., were at others, and finally gave up the hope of fixing the age of anything by its position.[2]

The theory of widely separate ages for old and new stone tools, and for bronze and iron, is one of those scientific fancies which further investigation overthrows. To use the words of the Duke of Argyle:[3] "There is no proof whatever that such ages ever existed in the world." Nations may all at a certain time have used stone tools, but

[1] Chabas, *Études sur l'Antiquité Historique*, p. 562.
[2] *Ibid*, chap. viii. p. 519.
[3] *Primeval Man*, p. 181.

the discovery of the metals must have been made much sooner at some places than at others. Thus, though flint implements have been found in abundance in South Africa, iron has been known from very ancient times over a large portion of that vast continent; iron ore, as Sir Samuel Baker informs us, being so common in Africa, and of a kind so easily reducible by heat, that its value might well be discovered by the rudest tribes. Stone, moreover, is rare in some countries, as, for example, in Mesopotamia, and hence it is not surprising to find that stone implements of a very rude character coexisted there with an advanced civilization in agriculture and commerce. Each "age," in fact, runs into the other, and tools of all the four kinds were used in not a few localities at the same time. So far from being indefinitely ancient, the stone age, in all its characteristics, has prevailed during even the historical period. A well-made bronze pin was found in an excavation at the Isle of St. Jean, near Maçon, in France, which till then had yielded only remains of the polished stone period, and M. Chabas found iron under similar circumstances elsewhere.[1] "The age of bronze must be limited more and more," says Professor Desor. "Iron is found throughout it." In Holland, tumuli known as Hunnebedden (the graves of the Hunni) are common. Beneath the covering of soil are found rough casings of unhewn stone, covering chambers of stone, regularly squared and smoothed, with a flooring of broken granite. Under this, funeral urns are met with, along with numerous flint tools and weapons, such as polished hatchets, chisels, arrow-heads, hammers, etc. Some of these are rough, that is, of the oldest "age;" others are

[1] *Études*, p. 522.

partly polished; still others, polished perfectly. Along with these, occur samples of pottery often of elegant shapes, and finely ornamented. Fifty of these barrows have been opened, without finding any trace of metal, and yet scientific men are of opinion that they are not older than the Roman period, when the country began to rise above the vast floods, which till then had covered it nearly every year. Holland and the neighbouring Low Countries seem, indeed, to have been formed from the vast beds of soil worn off the Alps and other mountains by the glaciers which formerly reached to the North Sea, but have now retreated to Switzerland, and from deposits by the waters of the Rhine, the Meuse, the Scheldt, the Ems, and the Yssel. At first only the sandhills and other elevations, natural or artificial, were habitable, and these in Cæsar's time, were still so many small islands, whose savage and brave inhabitants were believed to live on fish and the eggs of birds.[1] About the beginning of our era, the Batavians took possession of the country, but the Hunni lingered on amongst them even during the Roman period, and have left these tumuli, apparently remotely prehistoric, but, in fact, dating from the commencement of our era to A.D. 500.

The Chevalier de Rossi has found equally striking proofs of the lateness of the stone age in Italy.[2] "The whole evidence," says he, "proves to demonstration that the new stone age was very near that of true history." This conclusion is confirmed by the discoveries so frequently made, and every day becoming more numerous, of stone

[1] Cæsar, *Bell. Gall.*, iv.

[2] *Comptes Rendus du Congrès International d'Archæologie Prehistorique* (1871), p. 464.

weapons mixed with objects of bronze. I myself have found early uncoined copper money (*aes rude*) along with polished stone weapons; and a number of flint knives have been obtained from Etruscan graves. Indeed, a piece of *coined* copper money, marking a still later period, has been found in an Etruscan tomb alongside a stone knife, undoubtedly of the "new stone period." Not less striking are the results of excavations on the sites of the Roman-Gallic cities of France. Thus at Bibracte, the largest, richest, and most important town of the Edui,[1] there have been discovered, after scientific explorations, remains of pottery, jewellery, enamel-work, work in metal and *coins*, mingled with flint arrow-heads, polished stone axes, and a flint knife. The same results have been obtained on the site of Gergovia, near Clermont; weapons, vases and large pins of bronze, pieces of jewellery and Gallic coins have been found along with stone knives, arrow-heads, axes, etc.[2] Similar stone weapons and tools have also been met with on the site of Alesia, in the Jura, with the skeletons of Gauls, their personal ornaments, and weapons of bronze and iron, and even the remains of their armour.

The lateness of the stone period has received further illustration by the discovery that the ancient Egyptians, though already possessing and using all the metals, and enjoying a high civilization, systematically used stone tools for mining and other purposes. Brugsch found them along with remains of ancient pottery at the turquoise mines of Midian.[3] They are met with, moreover, so widely, and under such circumstances, through all

[1] Cæsar, *Bell. Gall.*, i. and vii. [2] Chabas, *Études*, p. 544.
[3] Brugsch, *Wanderungen nach den Turqis Minen*, p. 71.

Egypt, that it appears as if they continued to be used freely in common life.[1] M. Mariette found in the tombs of the ancient Egyptian empire at Saqqara, and at the pyramids, bas-reliefs showing workmen cutting wood with a tool exactly resembling the stone axes of the Polynesian Archipelago. There is a stone knife in the British Museum bearing an inscription which shows that it is not older than the sixth century before Christ; another, at Athens, has a Greek inscription; while a third, at Copenhagen, has one in Runic characters. There is, indeed, no distinctively stone age in Egypt, but stone tools are found abundantly along with those of iron and other metals, as if the Egyptians used them for many of the same purposes, and with almost equal commonness, as the barbarous peoples round, who did not know the metals, or were unable to procure them. Mr. Keast Lord[2] found in his minute explorations of the mines of Midian, that the veins of metal had been worked by stone tools exclusively, many of which he brought away with him; and he mentions, also, that, owing to geological changes, the lakes from which the miners obtained water for drinking, and for their operations, are now gone, though the shells of the fresh-water mussel, used for food by the miners, still remain in the old lake beds. Their huts, moreover, of rough dry stone, without mortar, and in everything bearing proofs of the highest antiquity, are still standing. Yet the inscriptions show incontestably that these workings, and the lakes themselves, date from within the strictly historical period, and even so late as the twelfth century before Christ. But for these inscriptions, however, the mines would certainly have been referred to an unknown antiquity, accompanied

[1] Chabas, *Études*, p. 377.

[2] *Leisure Hour* (1870), pp. 423 ff.

as they are by the fact of the vanished lakes and the archaic huts. But it cannot be said that the stone period is even yet a matter of the past, for M. Mariette, having noticed his Arab labourers shaving their heads with razors of flint, and the Arabs of Qournah having shown him Bedouin lances tipped with flint, justly says, that "he fancied himself transported to the stone period, and arrived at the conclusion that the age of stone survived in Egypt under the Pharaohs, the Greeks, the Romans, and the Arabs, and finally that it still, in a certain measure, survives in our own day."[1]

Nor, it is urged, is it necessarily a proof of their extreme antiquity that stone tools and weapons have been found along with the bones of quadrupeds no longer existing in the same latitudes. Parts of the mammoth, the cave bear, and the reindeer have been found at a depth of two feet under the surface in the caves of Rully de Germolles; and a human jaw, a mammoth's tooth, and a fine flint arrow have been found at the depth of thirty-two inches. Nor is it easy to judge of the time required for the disappearance of animals from a country. Within the historical period, the lion, the aurochs, and the bear abounded in Macedonia, and the boa in Calabria. The hippopotamus, which was hunted in Lower Egypt by the ancient Egyptians, and still lived in the Damietta mouth of the Nile in the time of the Caliphs, is now never seen farther north than 19°—that is, eight degrees farther south. The crocodile frequented the Delta 3,000 years ago; now, it never comes north of 27°, and is steadily going south. The reindeer seems, from a passage in Cæsar, to have still lived in Gaul in his days, for he speaks of "an ox of the shape

[1] Chabas. *Études*. p. 396. Dawson's *Fossil Man*, pp. 205 ff.

of a deer, from whose head, between its ears, a horn rises higher and less straight than the horns known to us. From its top (that is, from the top of this common base) branches spread out widely, like palms. Both male and female have the same shape and extent of horns."[1] The similarity of the head of a reindeer to that of the ox is well known, and the fact of male and female having similar horns is peculiar to it. It still lives in Asia even lower than 50°, and in America to 46°, which is fully 2° farther south than the latitude of Paris, and nearly on a line with Geneva, and with Odessa, in Southern Russia.

It is arguing unsafely to say that, because the rhinoceros, for example, is now found only in the tropics, it never lived in colder latitudes. The body of one "still retaining its corpulency," its skin, its tendons, and some of its flesh, was discovered in 1771, in Siberia, on the banks of the Wilaji river, a tributary of the Lena, at the latitude of about 65° north,—that is, on a line with the middle of Iceland. It was particularly noticed that it was covered with hair, to enable it to withstand the cold: a peculiarity which existed in the mammoth also, with the same object.[2] That huge animals like these could find subsistence in latitudes so high involves no difficulty, for hardy trees and shrubs still grow far north, in Siberia, and therefore, to use Prof. Owen's words, "we may safely infer that the mammoth would have found the requisite means of subsistence, from the twigs and branches, at the present day, and at all seasons, in the sixtieth parallel of latitude; and from the many proofs of increased severity in the climate of

[1] Cæsar, *Bell. Gall.*, vi. 24.

[2] A mammoth found in Siberia, in 1804, had very close-set red wool an inch and a half long over its skin, with black hair rising above it — an Arctic covering, in fact.

the northern hemisphere, we may assume that the mammoth habitually frequented still higher latitudes at the period of its actual existence. It has been suggested that as in our own times the northern animals migrate, so the Siberian rhinoceros and elephant may have wandered towards the north in summer. The hairy covering of the mammoth concurs with the localities of its most abundant remains, in showing that, like the reindeer, the northern extreme of the temperate zone was its metropolis."[1]

Strange to say, the wider range, in antiquity, of our modern mammoth, the elephant — of which the mammoth is a species — is illustrated by the hieroglyphics of Egypt and the cuneiform inscriptions of Assyria, for the former commemorate the killing of 120 in the chase, in Northern Syria, by Thothmes III. in the seventeenth century before Christ,[2] and the latter speaks of them as hunted in Mesopotamia five centuries later.[3]

Thus it is clear that the presence in northern countries of animals now found only in warm climates, or the disappearance of others from a given region, is no proof whatever of the lapse of very great periods of time.

The comparatively modern date of the stone age throws a reflected light on the time when the reindeer, elephant, great bear, etc., lived in Northwestern Europe, for stone tools, as well cut as those of the "new stone period," have been found among their remains, some of which still exhibit spirited sketches of the reindeer, mammoth, etc., graved on them by some sharp instrument. The theory of a vast interval between the rough and the polished stone

[1] Prof. Owen, quoted in art. "Elephant," *English Cyclop.*

[2] Brugsch's *Egypt*, vol. i. p. 358. Maspero's *Histoire Ancienne*, p. 205.

[3] Chabas, *Études*, p. 579. The Bengal tiger abounds in lat. 48°, to which the pola tailless hare sometimes wanders. *Antiq. of Man*, p. 158.

eras, or between them and that of bronze and iron, will not, in fact, stand examination, for they are often found together and continually occur under circumstances which decide their comparatively recent origin; and the supposition that the periods of the mammoth, reindeer, rhinoceros, etc., necessarily mark equally vast and remote intervals cannot be maintained.

It is still further urged against the doctrine of the immense antiquity of man, that geological changes are and have been continually going on. The land in the Gulf of Bothnia rises at the rate of thirty-nine inches in a century,[1] which in 3,000 years would give an elevation above its former level at that date, of over ninety-seven feet. But such a depression would turn Russia, from St. Petersburg to Sebastopol, into a great lake, with who can tell what effect in modifying the climate? No one can say that such a steady elevation has not been the gradual creation of Russia, within a comparatively recent period, by slowly draining off the waters of some ancient Scythian ocean—the sea, perhaps, beyond which the Hyperboreans—that is, the men who lived at the other side of the North Wind—were anciently thought to live.

A depression of two hundred and twenty feet in the volcanic region of the Bosphorus would effect equally startling results, for it needs no more to spread an inland fresh-water ocean from the plains of the Lower Danube and Southern Russia, over the areas of the Black, the Caspian, and the Aral Seas, with their neighbouring steppes, far and near—to create, in fact, a second Mediter-

[1] Prof. Green says from two to three feet in a century. *Geology*, p. 337. Prof. Jukes says that about the North Cape the land rises *five or six feet* in a century. *Manual of Geology*, p. 52.

ranean.[1] With the surface of the earth rising and sinking in so many regions even now, who can say that the tradition is wrong which ascribes the drainage of this vast region to a volcanic commotion rending open the Bosphorus about 1,500 years before Christ, and causing the terrible catastrophe which antiquity handed down in the legend of Deucalion's flood — the flood, it may be, of Genesis?

Nor is this great geological change alone in the recent history of our globe. Dr. Hecker, of Berlin, notices the fact that in the terrible paroxysms of nature which accompanied or preceded the Black Death, in the fourteenth century — the most awful mortality that ever attacked mankind—huge icebergs were formed on the east coast of Greenland, then inhabited by Northmen from Denmark and Iceland, and the land was shut in by a huge field of ice behind which it has ever since remained hidden.[2] The German Arctic Expedition of 1869-70, indeed, by the utmost efforts caught glimpses of the land, but their vessel was presently destroyed, and the crew saved only by drifting southwards on an ice floe for eight months together.[3] For twenty-six years before the Black Death, physical convulsions shook the surface of the earth in uninterrupted succession. Vast river districts were converted into swamps; a lake of more than one hundred leagues in circumference was formed in China, by the disappearance of a whole chain of mountains; in thousands of places chasms opened; springs burst out on the tops of hills, and dry tracts were laid under water in an inexplicable way. Cal-

[1] Wood's *Shores of Lake Aral*, p. 117.
[2] Hecker's *Epidemics of the Middle Ages*, p. 28.
[3] *The German Arctic Expedition* (London, 1874), passim.

amities and phenomena, in fact, which usually come singly, at distinct intervals, were crowded together, as no experience could have imagined possible.

Whatever the ultimate verdict may be respecting the antiquity of man, it has been supported by some arguments which have, undoubtedly, been shewn to be fallacious. Thus, in the last century, great weight was attached to the evidence believed to be supplied by the painted ceilings of ancient Egyptian temples. The wonderful symbolical representations of the zodiac, on which I have gazed with awe in the grand ruins at Dendera and elsewhere, on the Nile, were supposed to be, at least, 14,000 or 15,000 years old, and, of course, man was assumed to be indefinitely older. But the quick eye of Champollion saw that, after all, they date only from the Roman period. In the same way, Chinese chronology was fancied, at one time, to run back authentically to periods astoundingly remote, but a better knowledge of the subject has shewn that the historical period in China does not reach farther from us at most than 2,200 years before Christ,[1] and even that Chinese civilization travelled eastward, from the Euphrates. Dr. Edkins, indeed, would limit the historical period to B.C. 781, or at most to B.C. 1154.[2] India was supposed at one time to boast of a history whose shadowy periods triumphantly proved the remoteness of man's creation. But science now grants that the earliest Indian event it can trace is the appearance of the Aryan tribes in the plains of Hindustan, "perhaps about the year B.C. 2000."[3]

[1] Brockhaus' *Conversations Lex.* (xii. Auf.), vol. iv. p. 611.
[2] *Leisure Hour* (1876), p. 653.
[3] Brockhaus' *Conversations Lex.* (xii. Auf.), vol. xi. p. 325.

Failing in the case of China and India, Egypt seemed next to offer itself as a country of immemorial antiquity. Boeckh,[1] a distinguished German scholar, set down the date of the reign of Menes, who is universally accepted as the first king of Egypt, at 5,702 years before Christ. Unger,[2] another great German scholar, preferred the year 5613. Mariette Bey, the learned French Director of the Antiquarian Museum at Cairo, struck off the odd centuries, and fixed Menes at 5,004 years before Christ, in which he is followed by Lenormant,[3] his most distinguished disciple. Professor Maspero, of Paris, thinks the year 4500 about the proper date. Brugsch Bey has chosen the year 4455. Lepsius[4] and Ebers[5], master and disciple, think that Menes reigned 3,892 years before Christ. Dr. Birch[6] decided for "about the year before Christ 3000." Mr. Reginald Stuart Poole[7] thinks the proper date the year 2717; while the late Sir G. Wilkinson,[8] nearly agreeing with Mr. Poole, ascribed the accession of Menes to the year before Christ 2691.

Between the highest and the lowest of these calculations there is a difference of no less than 3,011 years, and yet they are all the estimates of distinguished men. The result involved in such a variation is the same as if some future historian were to date the reign of our present queen from the year 1837, while another maintained that her proper place was in the days of Moses.

The only authority for Egyptian chronology, till recently, was the lists of kings quoted by various ancient

[1] Born 1785, died 1867.
[2] Born 1800, died 1870.
[3] *Manuel de l'Histoire Ancienne*, p. 321.
[4] In his *Chronologie der Egypten* (1849).
[5] *Eine Ægyptische Königstochter*, vol. i. p. 211.
[6] *Egypt from the Earliest Times*, p. 23.
[7] *Dictionary of the Bible*, vol. i. p. 508.
[8] Rawlinson's *Herodotus*, vol. ii. p. 287.

writers from the lost book of Manetho, an Egyptian priest of the third century before Christ. But his figures have been a constant perplexity to students, since he follows the Egyptian custom of counting all the years of kings who reigned more or less together, as when a son was crowned during his father's life. No wonder that Brugsch should say that this source of error alone "places such doubts and difficulties in the way, as to make one despair in putting together a chronological table of the old Egyptian empire."[1] "The greatest hindrance to a regular Egyptian chronology," says Lenormant, "is the circumstance that the Egyptians themselves never had any chronology at all."[2] "Everything still remains to be done in this province" (that of chronology), says Brugsch, "so far as relates to the time preceding the Twenty-sixth Dynasty, that is, to the year B.C. 666."[3]

The high antiquity of Egyptian civilization was at one time thought to be proved by relics obtained by Mr. Horner from borings in the mud of the Delta, and indeed Ebers quotes them even now in support of it.[4] That a piece of pottery had been found at the depth of 39 feet was taken as proof of its having been buried for 13,000 years.[5] Sir J. Lubbock and Sir C. Lyell, accepting this conclusion, came to wonderful conclusions; for their estimates, with those of various papers read before learned societies, are that bricks and pottery in Egypt date from 12,000 to 60,000 years back. Unfortunately for all this fine speculation, Sir Robert Stephenson found in the Delta, near Damietta, at a greater depth than Mr. Horner

[1] Brugsch, *History of Egypt*, vol. i. p. 120. [2] Lenormant, vol. i. p. 322.
[3] Brugsch, I. xviii. 183.
[4] *Ægypten und die Bücher Moses*, p. 22.
[5] Lubbock's *Prehistoric Times*, p. 395.

ever reached, a brick bearing on it the stamp of Mohammed Ali.[1] Mr. Horner, moreover, supposed the rate of the deposit of mud, at a given spot, only three and a half inches in a century, but the description of the same spot by a Mohammedan writer only six centuries ago, shows that the mud was deposited at the rate of over eighteen inches in a hundred years.[2]

The evidence of language has been advanced as another ground for believing in the extreme antiquity of the human race, but it is a question if it be entitled to very much weight. The appearance of the Aryan tribes in Hindustan, for example, is fixed by the highest authorities at not further back than about 2,000 years before Christ,[3] but what changes and developments have taken place since then in the Sanscrit language which they spoke! It has itself died out, but from it have sprung the Hindu dialects of India, the Zend of ancient Persia, the Greek, Latin, Italian, French, Spanish, Portuguese, and Wallachian; the different Celtic languages; the Gothic, German, and Scandinavian languages, including English; and the Slavonic, of which there are many mutually unintelligible dialects in Russia, Austria, and Bulgaria. Iceland was colonized by the Northmen in the ninth century; but their language, then pure Scandinavian, is not understood by other Scandinavian races now. The Nibelungen Lied is only seven hundred years old, but its German is a sealed language except to scholars. A

[1] Southall's *Recent Origin of Man*, p. 474. [2] Southall, p. 474.

[3] Haug, indeed (*Essays on the Sacred Language, etc., of the Parsees*, p. 225), assigns the date of B.C. 1500 for the dawn of Iranic civilization, or that of the Medes, Persians, and perhaps the Bactrians, while Max Müller (*Ancient Sanscrit Lit.*, p. 572) thinks that Indian civilization *began* about B.C. 1200. I do not forget the controversy as to the early seat of the Aryans, but whether it was in Europe or in Asia does not affect the argument in the text.

thousand years ago a national song might have waked enthusiasm over all the area in which English, Dutch, and German are now spoken in Europe, for its language would have been everywhere understood. Since the colonization of Iceland, three new languages, of course related, have sprung from the Scandinavian—the Swedish, Danish, and Norwegian. Fifteen hundred years ago Latin was the mother tongue of all the nations now speaking the Portuguese, Spanish, French, Italian, and Wallachian. There are nearly a hundred languages spoken at this time in the Caucasus, and in South America Humboldt reckoned them by hundreds. Amongst the one hundred islands occupied by the Melanesian race, there are no less than two hundred languages, differing from each other as much as Dutch and German. Among some races of Central Africa, Barth tells us, the want of friendly intercourse between tribes and families has caused so many dialects to spring up as to make communication between them difficult. On the river Amazon Mr. Bates found several individuals in a canoe speaking mutually unintelligible languages. It is, in fact, impossible to fix any approximate period for the rise of new forms of speech. "If there be nothing like literature or society to keep changes within limits," says Max Müller, "two villages, separated for only a few generations, will soon become mutually unintelligible. This takes place in America as well as on the borders of China and India; and in the North of Asia, Messerschmidt relates that the Ostiaks, though really speaking the same language everywhere, have produced so many words and forms peculiar to each tribe, that even within the limit of ten or twelve German miles, conversation between them becomes extremely difficult."

What, then, must have been the history of language in the early ages of the world, when each petty tribe was at war with its neighbour ; when society, literature, and civilization were yet unborn, and when the human mind itself had as yet the instability and ignorance of childhood ?

The varieties of the human race have been held another proof of its extreme antiquity. The contrast between the negro and other branches of mankind has especially been insisted upon, the fact being often quoted that we find him mentioned in a historical Egyptian document of the Seventh Dynasty,[1] and depicted exactly as he is, on the monuments, at a later period. But the rise of a new type and even of a new colour of mankind is not unknown even within the historical period. The Jews of the East are now as black as the inhabitants, while those of cold countries are as fair as Caucasians. The American differs in the whole physical appearance and in the shape of his face from the Englishman, whose near descendant he is. The Turks of Europe in a few centuries have diverged so far from their Tartar original that they are sometimes referred to the Caucasian stock, though we know their Mongolian origin. The Magyars of Hungary have lost in a thousand years nearly every trace of the Tartar features of their ancestors—the Ostiaks of Northern Siberia. The tall, lank American Indians can be recognized as derived from the squat and strongly marked Mongol, only by the unerring witness of their various languages. Who would suspect the uncouth and stunted Lapp to be of the same family as the tall, well-formed, handsome Magyar ? Yet they were originally one.

The negro seems, indeed, to have assumed his typical

[1] Brugsch, vol. i. p. 99. *Records of the Past*, vol. ii. p. 3.

characteristics from special conditions, in a tropical climate. "The real African," says Winwood Reade,[1] a most competent witness, "is copper-coloured, and superior to the negro, mentally and physically. It is my belief that the negro inhabits only maritime districts, or the marshy districts of the interior; that he originally belonged to the copper-coloured race; and that his degeneration of type is due entirely to the influences of climate and food." The privations of the natives of Connemara, in the year preceding the famine of 1847, were remarked as having led to a change in the whole physical type: the jaws becoming prominent, as in the negro, and other parts also being affected. It is to be remembered, moreover, that a modification of structure or colour once introduced becomes permanent, and that circumstances may induce it, to the most surprising extent, in a very short time, as we see in the lower animals. All the varieties of domestic pigeons are traced by Darwin to the stock-dove,[2] and are rightly ascribed by him to artificial selection by man. Accidental malformation may be artificially perpetuated, when desired, by separation of the malformed as the stock of a new variety. The different breeds of sheep, horses, oxen, goats, cats, rabbits, and still more of domestic fowl, show that all these species, even while under human observation, are subject to greater variations than are found in the different races of men.[3]

Whether the different families which repeopled the earth after the Deluge had already become more or less contrasted, is not within the possibility of answer. But

[1] *Anthropological Review* (Nov., 1864), p. 341.

[2] *Origin of Species*, p 23. Many interesting facts on the subject of this chapter may be found in Wiseman's *Connexion between Science and Revealed Religion.*

[3] See, on this, *Eng. Cyclo.*, vol. ix. p. 670.

with the acknowledged changes in bony structure and colour, which have been quoted from instances within recent times, there surely remains no surpassing difficulty in the belief that the negro may early have assumed his special characteristics, from special influences of locality and food; and these, by a law of nature, would be perpetuated ever after. The words of Darwin respecting varieties in domestic animals need only slight change to be applied to mankind. "The argument mainly relied on by those who believe in the multiple origin of our domestic animals is, that we find in the most ancient records, more especially on the monuments of Egypt, much diversity in the breeds; and that some of the breeds resemble, perhaps are identical with, those still existing. Even if this latter fact were found more strictly and generally true than seems to me to be the case, what does it show, but that some of our breeds originated there, four or five thousand years ago?"[1]

It is now many years since Darwin published his "Descent of Man" (1871), which startled the world by calmly maintaining that we have sprung, by slow and almost imperceptible stages, from the lower animals. Man's extreme antiquity on the earth, which had first been broached about twelve years before, was thenceforward urged with increased confidence. But, to use the words of Dr. Wallace, one of the foremost of living naturalists, and the most eminent supporter of some of Mr. Darwin's views: "It is a curious circumstance that, notwithstanding the attention that has been directed to the subject in every part of the world, and the numerous excavations connected with railways and mines, which have offered such facilities

[1] *Origin of Species*, p. 18.

for geological discoveries, no advance whatever has been made for a considerable number of years in detecting the time or mode of man's origin. The Palæolithic (old rough) flint implements, first discovered in the North of France nearly fifty years ago, are still the oldest undisputed proofs of man's existence; and amid the countless relics of a former world that have been brought to light, no evidence of any one of the links that must have connected man with the lower animals has yet appeared."[1] Two skulls, supposed to be the oldest as yet found, show no trace of inferiority. One is not of so low a type as that of most existing savages, but, to use the words of Professor Huxley, "may have belonged to a philosopher, or may have contained the thoughtless brains of a savage;" the other, as Dr. Pruner-Bey informs us, surpasses the average of modern European skulls; while its symmetrical form compares favourably with the skulls of many civilized nations of modern times.

Nor is the want of evidence of the development of humbler into higher races limited to man. Its utter absence in the case of the lower animals, and of plants, goes far to show that the theory has no basis of facts in nature, and that it is thus most unlikely to be correct in reference to human beings. "The doctrine of the transformation of species," says Heer, "is most decidedly contradicted by facts. Not only has no new species originated during the period of human history, but even the lignites (or woody coal), which go back to a much earlier time, ex-

[1] *Tropical Nature and other Essays*, p. 286, by A. R. Wallace. Mr. Wallace, like Mr. Boyd Dawkins (*Cave Hunting*), believes man to have been pre-glacial—that is, to have existed hundreds of thousands of years ago; in fact, that he existed in the Miocene Age. He has himself told me he was inclined to believe this. Hence his words on the origin of man have the greater weight.

hibit the existing flora. The present Swiss Alpine plants are the descendants of the Alpine drift flora, but, though living under different physical conditions, it is impossible to distinguish those of the present day from plants of the drift flora of Iceland and Greenland. It is the same with marine animals. No new species has had its origin since the drift period. Nor is this peculiar to the drift. The same facts are true of preceding geological periods. The same species maintain their existence through long cycles, and often, in all parts of the globe, present precisely the same characteristics. The formation immediately following any earlier period, and belonging to a new epoch, may contain some species inherited from the preceding period, but the greater part of the species show us a new type, and present distinct characteristics. There are no forms which would indicate a fusion of species."[1] While, therefore, readily granting that, in a broad and indefinite sense, there is a basis of truth in the doctrine of evolution, it seems impossible to accept it as a solution of all the details of animal and vegetable life. It is easy to say that the rocks preserve so few examples of the flora or fauna of past geological ages that we cannot expect to recover the whole of the links between the infinitely varied plant or animal life around us. It is easy, moreover, to point to instances in which links between extinct and existing genera and families have been found, such as the five-toed primitive horse of the Eocene beds of North America, or toothed birds, or a creature with a swan-like neck, toothed jaws, and hind limbs on which it walked—the links, also, between pigs and hippopotami, and between tapirs, horses, and rhinoceroses, between seals and whales, between sloths

[1] Heer, vol. ii. pp. 282, 291.

and beavers, between lemurs and man-like apes, and between ganoids and mud fishes; but, after all, the resemblances are in most cases very partial and the gaps are wide. They undoubtedly prove development within unknown limits, but to conclude from the evidence they supply that the million forms of life in air and earth and sea are the slow outcome of an original speck of jelly, though easy enough to philosophers, is a severe strain on such as myself: a strain too great for my faculties. I cannot accept it.

It has further been noticed, in regard to man, that so far from deterioration as we go back, we find it rather as we come down towards the present; for the oldest cave-dwellings, claimed by some scientific men as marking an immemorial antiquity for the race, show a far higher degree of mental activity and civilization in their inhabitants than the relics of what are held to be much later times. The variety of tools and weapons—scrapers, awls, hammers, saws, lances, axes, etc.—the numerous bone implements, including well-formed needles, implying that skins were sewn together, and perhaps even textile materials woven into cloth—above all, the numerous carvings and drawings, representing a variety of animals, such as horses, reindeer, and even a mammoth, executed with striking skill on bone, reindeer horns, and mammoth tusks, show a mental development much higher than that of some of our modern savages. Thus, instead of growing like the animals, as he recedes into dim antiquity, man has, at best, only preserved the high type shown in these, his earliest ancestors.[1]

[1] In reference to the flint tools and weapons found in caves like those of Devonshire or Derbyshire, it has been said that the fact of the mouths of the caves being now high above the level of streams which formerly overflowed into them, marks an untold lapse of time. But elevations of land are common, frequently rapid, and

Since, then, no trace of an approach to the ape, in any particular, has been found in any geological deposit or superficial drift, we may dismiss the simial origin of man as an utterly unsupported theory. The lowest rocks have preserved the traces of marine worms and other zoöphytes, the carboniferous strata entomb specimens of fruits, flowers, and leaves, and of the spiders and insects then existing: the other rocks abound in the remains of animals of all kinds, and retain even the impress of the foot of a bird or a small reptile, and of the rain-drops of a passing shower, on what was once soft sand. Surely, then, some traces would have been forthcoming of the missing links between man and the lower orders had they ever existed. It will be time enough to dwell on the creature "not worthy to be called a man," which some think was our immediate ancestor, when some proof is given of his ever having been more than a wild invention.

No authority stands higher on this subject than that of Professors Virchow and Dana, the former of whom tells us that "not a single fossil skull of an ape or ape-man has yet been found that could really have belonged to a human being; that every addition to the amount of objects which

often, moreover, very limited in their range. The Temple of Serāpis, at Pozzuoli, near Naples, which I visited a short time since, shows that within the historic period, the spot where it stands was once beneath the sea; was afterwards upraised, and became the site of a temple older than the one whose remains are now standing; was possibly again submerged, and again upraised before the building of the present ruin; was again let down till the sea rose at least twenty feet above the pavement of the Temple; was again raised into dry land, and is now slowly sinking once more. Countless holes eaten into the pillars by sea mollusks pit their whole surface, on the parts which have been left unburied in the sand, while they were submerged. The huge pillars are riddled, at the height of perhaps twenty feet, with holes; while the lower portion, which had been covered with sand or silt during its immersion, is still smooth. The sea is now at a considerable distance, and the whole ruins are laid out for the inspection of visitors. The pillars are very large, and the building must have been very imposing. It stood in a court of which the sides were lined with buildings, and which has been cleared out to the level of the ancient pavement.

we have obtained as materials for discussion has removed us further from the hypothesis propounded, and that, on the whole, we must really acknowledge that there is a complete absence of any fossil type of a lower stage in the development of man." Professor Dana, with equal explicitness, reminds us, that "of that line which is supposed to have reached upward to man, not the first link between the lowest level of existing man has yet been found. If the links ever existed, their annihilation, without trace, is so exceedingly improbable that it may be pronounced impossible. Until some are found science can never assert they existed." Till then, we prefer to extend to both the physiology and higher nature of man the words which Professor Huxley limits to the latter; that between man and all lower animals, even the highest, there is a difference so wide that it cannot be measured—"an enormous gulf," "a divergence immeasurable" and "practically infinite." Indeed, he might almost, apparently, have adopted the words of Max Müller: "Man alone employs language,—he alone comprehends himself,—alone has the power of abstraction,—alone possesses general ideas. He alone believes in God." When such absolute contrasts obtrude themselves, the choice of opinions seems easy. There may well have been in the Creator's plan gradual development of powers, or changes of appearance, as the result of long-continued change of outward relations; but, beyond this, the theory of man's descent or that of other creatures, from races below them, remains a mere theory still. For our part, we prefer to believe that our race has been endowed directly by the Almighty with unique mental and spiritual characteristics, rather than follow the anthropologists, who would trace us back to the lower creatures.

There is much, then, to be said for the comparatively modern origin of man, from the same points of view as supply men of science for their opposite views. Yet it becomes us to deal with the subject modestly, keeping our minds open to receive whatever is finally shewn on grounds that are beyond dispute to be the "testimony of the rocks." False facts are to be guarded against on both sides, for they abound even more than false theories. But it is to be remembered that the scientific men of the age must be regarded as no less earnest in their search after truth than those who stand most zealously by the ideas of the past. Nor is it to be forgotten that the final decision does not rest on isolated details, whether respecting the presence or absence, in particular cases, of stone or metal implements, or the rate of cave deposits, or the existence of particular animals or their disappearance, but rather on the relation of human remains that may be discovered to all these phenomena, as read by the trained eye of scientific investigation. It may be quite true, geologists might urge, that all advanced in these pages is correct, while, notwithstanding, other considerations offer themselves, on which they feel themselves justified in holding fast to their belief in the remote presence of man on the earth. Nor can we lightly challenge the question whether it is probable that scientific men of all countries, with their skilled observation, their power of balancing and weighing facts in their special departments, and their honest desire to come to a reliable conclusion, could have come to virtual unanimity on this subject had there not been reasons for doing so that cannot easily be confuted. I do not myself, as I have said, affect to do more than state the matter in its different lights, but it is quite certain that whatever may be the

verdict gathered finally from the witness of Nature, it cannot be in any way opposed to the true utterances of the Word of God, rightly interpreted.

The original state of man has been supposed, by those who believe in his extreme antiquity, to have been one of "utter barbarism,"[1] wanting even elementary religious ideas: our present civilization being the gradual development of untold ages.

But there are many grounds for questioning this theory. It cannot, for instance, be inferred that the discovery of rude stone implements in any country is an index of the state of civilization in other parts of the world at the same time; for in that case the South Sea Islanders and the Eskimo would determine the estimate of our present condition in a way hardly just. Nor can the finding similar tools in Germany, France, or England be any measure of the civilization existing at the period to which they belong on the banks of the Euphrates or Nile.[2]

It is the mode of this school to collect all the most degraded and savage customs and usages of any people, and assume that they are traces of the original condition of the race. But such a course is utterly unphilosophical, for it may with equal force be urged that they are illustrations of the decay of a primitive civilization, under circumstances leading to such degradation. That tribes and nations have thus sunk is beyond a question. Herodotus[3] tells us of the Geloni, a Greek people, who, having been expelled from the cities on the northern coast of the Euxine, had retired into the interior, and there lived in wooden huts, and spoke a language "half Greek, half

[1] This is the view of Sir J. Lubbock, in his *Prehistoric Man*.
[2] Duke of Argyll's *Primeval Man*, p. 184. [3] *Herod.*, iv. 108.

Scythian." By the first century after Christ, Mela tells us they had become completely barbarous, and used the skins of their slain enemies as coverings for themselves and their horses.[1] The Veddas of Ceylon, now savages of the most debased type, are believed, on the reliable ground of their vocabulary, to be degenerate descendants of the tribes who brought Aryan civilization to the plains of Hindustan.[2] "They make themselves understood," says Sir Emerson Tennent, "by signs, grimaces, and guttural sounds, which have little resemblance to definite words, or language in general." Yet of this race Max Müller writes: "More than half of the words used by them are mere corruptions of Sanscrit; their very name is the Sanscrit for hunter. If now they stand low in the scale of humanity, they once stood higher; nay, they may possibly prove in language, if not in blood, the distant cousins of Plato, and Newton, and Goethe."[3] The obliteration of Roman civilization in many parts of the empire, after the irruption of the barbarians, is an equally striking example of the lapse of nations from a higher to a lower culture.

It is easy to realize how the mere pressure of increasing numbers on the means of subsistence would drive weak tribes from hospitable to more and more wretched homes, where with security, except from each other, they would have to maintain such a struggle for existence as must infallibly involve their sinking into barbarism. The Eskimo at the north of the American continent, and the savages of Terra del Fuego in the far south, are illustrations; for what but dire necessity could have forced human beings to take up their abode in such terrible regions, if the warm

[1] *Pomp. Mel.*, ii. 1.
[2] Rawlinson's *Origin of Nations*, p. 5.
[3] *Chips*, vol. iv. p. 360.

and fertile landscapes of happier climates had been open to them? Even amidst Arctic regions, indeed, the feuds of tribes drive the weaker still farther north. Thus Admiral Osborne[1] informs us that a tribe wandering along the extreme northern edge of the Siberian coast had recently driven another tribe across the Frozen Sea to an island lying so far north that only its mountain tops could be occasionally seen from the Siberian headlands. "Terra del Fuego," says Mr. Darwin, "is a broken mass of wild rocks, lofty hills, and useless forests, and these are viewed through mists and endless storms. The habitable land is reduced to the stones of the beach. In search of food the people are compelled to wander unceasingly from spot to spot, and so steep is the coast that they can only move about in their wretched canoes."[2] How could tribes in such a land, or those in the uttermost north, amidst eternal ice, be anything but degraded? But it cannot surely be said that they were created at first where we now find them, and it is hard to believe that they have not become greatly lower than their ancestors, who came from happier lands.

The supposed absence of any religion among some savage races has been assumed as a proof of the "utter barbarism" of primeval man. But surely if some men, as, for example, the late John Stuart Mill, can speak of themselves as without any religion, even amidst modern society, it is easy to understand how the gross mental darkness of long-continued savagery, struggling for the meanest existence, may efface or nearly efface all religious conceptions. It is, moreover, certain that religions are apt to decay as

[2] *Times*, December 30th, 1867.
[1] Darwin's *Voyage of a Naturalist*, p. 216.

they grow old. "If there is one thing," says Max Müller, "which a comparative study of religions places in the clearest light, it is the inevitable decay to which every religion is exposed."[1] Nor is it at all a necessity that even if man were originally placed merely in the first step of ascending culture he might not have had lofty and pure though simple views of God and of his duty. The further we go back in history the clearer become the traces of some pure traditions and the rays of some primeval light.[2]

The fact that during the ages in which extreme barbarism prevailed over Europe—and when the world at large seems to have been peopled mostly by tribes reduced to the deepest rudeness by constant wars, and by the savagery to which these led,—a civilization such as that of Egypt should have existed, seems, further, to imply the preservation on the banks of the Nile of an inheritance from an earlier period of culture and advancement. Archbishop Whately's argument that no tribe or people was ever civilized from within itself, but always by influences from without,[3] seems indisputable if applied to such utter degradation as Sir J. Lubbock assumes in the first men—a degradation leaving them hardly above the animals. Some Prometheus must surely in such a case have brought the Divine spark to them from heaven. But in Egypt we find, apparently as early as B.C. 3000[4]—that is, 5,000 years ago—a civilization producing marvels of architecture which still remain unique. To raise a structure like the Great Pyramid, 746 feet

[1] *Chips from a German Workshop*, vol. i. p. xxiii.

[2] *Primeval Man*, p. 190.

[3] Whately's *Miscellaneous Essays. Lecture on Civilization.*

[4] Chabas gives the date of the Pyramids at B.C. 3300. Lepsius and Ebers at B.C. 3100, 3000.

square at the base, rising to a height of 450 feet, requiring the labour, for thirty years, of relays of men, numbering, in all, eleven millions![1]—a structure, to present it in another way, covering a ground space of over twelve square acres, containing 90,000,000 cubic feet of masonry, and weighing, as is calculated, 6,316,000 tons,[2]—implies an earlier civilization of which it is the crowning triumph. This is still more certain when we find that it is truly square, the sides being equal and the angles right angles; that the four sockets in which the first four stones of the corners rest are exactly on the same level; that the directions of the sides are accurately to the four cardinal points; and that the vertical height of the pyramid bears the same proportion to its circumference at the base as the radius of a circle does to its circumference.[3] Nor are all these measures, angles, and levels merely in a degree accurate; the best modern instruments can scarcely detect the very slightest error. The workmanship of the interior chambers, moreover, is not less wonderful, for the passages, and the chambers themselves, are lined with huge blocks of granite, polished to the highest degree, and fitted into each other with the utmost accuracy.[4] Such architecture surely points back not to "utter degradation," but to an inheritance of civilization presumably from beyond the Flood.

The distinguishing characteristics of the corn plants, such as oats, wheat, barley, rice, maize, etc., seem in the same way to point to a very different condition from

[1] *Herodotus*, ii. 124. [2] *English Cyclopædia*, art. "Egypt."

[3] Professor Piazzi Smyth's *Our Inheritance in the Great Pyramid*. Professor Smyth devoted many months to these measurements, etc., using the best instruments.

[4] Birks' *Egypt*, vol. i. p. 35. Wallace's *Tropical Nature*, etc., p. 299.

"utter degradation," as that of our first parents. Like the fruit trees and many of the existing animals, they make their appearance on the earth along with man, and are entirely unknown in earlier ages. Moreover, while the primitive types of all our other esculent plants are still to be found in this or other countries, those of the corn plants are utterly unknown. Corn has never been met with except as a cultivated plant.[1] It is found in the wrappings of Egyptian mummies, and in the charred remains of the Swiss Lake dwellings, but never apart from its cultivation by man. It cannot grow spontaneously, and is never, like other plants, self-sown and self-spread. If not cultivated, it soon disappears and becomes extinct. It

[1] An article in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, 1888, vol. i. p. 388, having asserted on the authority of Professor de Candolle, of Geneva, the greatest living botanist, that a French traveller, M. Houssay, had found wheat growing wild in the hills about 134 miles north of the Persian Gulf, I wrote M. de Candolle on the subject, and have received the following interesting reply :

"When I read what this traveller says, I wrote to him at Lyons, where he lived. He replied that he believed he had seen wheat growing wild ; that he had pulled a handful and had put it under the flap of his saddle, but, on his reaching at night the place where he was to stay, his servant, thinking the stalks were worthless, threw them away. It would have been worth more if M. Houssay had put some ears in his pocket, or in a book, that they might have been examined on his return to Europe. He appeared an educated man, more or less a naturalist, but rather, I fancy, a zoölogist than a botanist. His opinion is thus a simple probability, like that of the traveller Olivier, at the beginning of this century, because neither he nor his companion shewed specimens of the wheat which they called wild. Berosus, after Herodotus, had said the same thing respecting Mesopotamia.

"Thus, we have three statements, each wanting the proof it would have had, if the plant had been examined in Europe by a botanist, though three probabilities, pointing to the same region, go so far towards a proof. It is to be added that the culture of wheat is prehistoric in those parts of Western Asia of which Mesopotamia is the centre. Maize and tobacco furnish cases somewhat similar to wheat. Thus we know that they are indigenous to America, and also that their use has spread from the river La Plata to the United States since the discovery of the New World ; but these plants were never found growing wild in a few years before our own day. Tobacco, however, has latterly been discovered wild in the Republic of Ecuador, by M. Andrè, who has shewn me specimens, and this country lies between the opposite extremes of its ancient culture. As to maize, it appears to be extinct as a wild plant. Probably wild wheat will be found in the region where three travellers have believed they saw it. The first hypothesis is much the more likely to be correct."

needs human labour to perpetuate it, and seems to have been given us by God as it is, to stimulate our industry and reward it.[1] If the ear be plucked off before ripening, a second growth rises from the roots the next year; but if it too be cut off, the plant is soon destroyed altogether by the more vigorous natural grasses. Given by God to our first parents, the grain plants secured a transcendent blessing for all their offspring, on condition of steady industry in their cultivation; but such a gift implies a condition far removed from Sir J. Lubbock's "utter degradation."

It is not necessary to suppose that man was created in any state of artificial luxury or refinement. The truest happiness is found not in an overwrought civilization, but in the simple plenty and contentment of a condition where our wants are still few and natural, and our intelligence and knowledge acute and sufficient, if not disciplined and profound.[2] The Ohio farmer, or the Swiss peasant, owning his land, free from any anxiety for the future, with every want of the body supplied, and nature, if not books, ever open to feed his mind, may enjoy life and be worthy of it, far more than if his lot had been cast in the midst of an artificial refinement. The soul, moreover, "that pillar of true dignity in man," is independent of outward circumstances for the grandeur of its hopes, contemplations, or spiritual life. The clear heaven of an innocent bosom is an element which, added to a very simple outward condition, would make it a paradise; and that our first parents had. How much knowledge they had we cannot tell; but, remembering the fact that the mere savage resembles the

[1] See *Bible Teachings in Nature*, p. 102. By Rev. Dr. Macmillan.

[2] See some thoughtful remarks in S. Baring Gould's *Heathenism and Mosaism*, p. 49.

brute, inasmuch as he makes no improvements,[1] it is not too much to believe that they possessed the germs of much that needed only experience to develop into the arts and sciences of life and nature. If it be asked, in Fichte's words, "Who then educated the first pair?" his answer may also be given, "A spirit bestowed its care on them;" that is, they were gifted with intuitive knowledge, as far as needed, at their creation.

[1] Whately's *Origin of Civilization*, p. 34. Zöckler's *Beziehungen zwischen Theologie und Naturwissenschaft*, vol. iii. p. 751. On this subject and others connected with the Antiquity of Man, much interesting information will be found in *Fossil Men and their Modern Representatives*, by J. W Dawson, LL.D., etc. London, 1880.

CHAPTER IX.

THE DESCENDANTS OF ADAM.

THE stay of man in Eden may have been longer or shorter, but from the first it could only have been conditional. Mere untried virtue does not deserve the name; nor can they be said to have a character—that is, a moral nature—who have not been tempted. Goodness is not a passive quality, but the deliberate preference of right to wrong; the resistance of evil and the manly assertion of its opposite. The innocence of childhood is only that of a nature so incomplete that it has as yet no passions to resist. But with opening manhood there must come trial, for it bears the elements of it in its bosom. Our first parents, like ourselves, stood face to face with countless solicitations of the intellect and heart, however excited, and it remained to be seen whether they would subordinate them to the higher will of God, or weakly act in independence of Him. In either case, good and evil would alike have been learned; the good in the peace it brought, the evil as its hateful opposite; or the evil in the misery it involved, and the good only as the peace for which we yearn. The latter was the choice; but sad as it has proved, it has had this mitigation, that the struggle toward the good that had been lost is the source of all that is most noble. Better, unspeakably, to have developed under the favour and in the friendship of Heaven; but still, even as it is, our fallen state is tempered

by the discipline of struggle, intellectual and moral, to which we were henceforth committed.

Eden was no longer the place for man when he had lost that peace and joy of his higher nature which it had symbolized. It is impossible to fancy what is meant by the Tree of Life. Like the fabled tree of the Persians, or like that of India, it may have yielded the food and drink of immortality,[1] or it may only have been a symbol of the great truth, that spiritual life is to be sought by us, not from within, through our own faculties or powers, but from without, at the hands of God.[2] In any case, man had separated himself from his Creator, and he must needs be made to realize it by leaving a scene identified with the Divine presence.

But though he was punished for his transgression, our first parent was not cursed. Mysterious beings—in long after times the appointed guardians of the mercy seat[3] in the Tabernacle and in the Temple—were set, with flaming sword, to keep the way of the Tree of Life. What this can mean it is impossible to understand, for we know nothing by which to illustrate it. The symbolical creatures to whom the name Cherubim is given in Scripture throw no light on it, for we can never argue from a symbol as if it were a reality.

Their presence, however, hints at least at the yearning of man for immortality, and is in keeping with the great promise with which Scripture closes, that those found worthy shall have right to the Tree of Life, in the midst of the better Paradise of the City of God.[4] The Jews of

[1] Rosenmüller's *Das A. und N. Morgenland*, vol. i. p. 9.
[2] Bishop Harold Browne, in *Speaker's Commentary*, vol. i. p. 40.
[3] Exod. xxv. 17-22.
[4] Rev. xxii. 14.

Christ's day, indeed, fondly cherished this hope. "And it is permitted no single mortal," says the Book of Enoch, "to touch this tree of sweetest fragrance till the time of the Great Judgment; but, when everything shall be reconciled and made perfect forever, it will be given over to the righteous and lowly."[1]

Is it idle to think that the flaming splendour was more than a mere barrier to man's approach, especially when the Cherubim, who are always connected with ideas of the presence of God, are introduced along with it? They overarched the mercy seat with their wings; they are represented as bearing up the throne of God.[2] Was not the brightness,—darting, in this case, its sword-like rays on every side,—the symbol of the presence of God; like the light which shone from the cloud, on the camp of Israel in the wilderness? May it not have marked the first sanctuary of our fallen race? May not Cain have alluded to it when he went out from "the presence of Jehovah"?[3] May not our first parents, in their penitence, have cried out before it, like the Psalmist of later days, "O Thou that dwellest between the Cherubim, shine forth!"[4]

The first children born to Adam were to bear sad proof of the ruin which sin had brought on mankind. Cain, the first-born, was thought a great gift from God when he came; a "possession"—a "shoot" from the parental stem—to be cherished with all a mother's love. But his name had the double meaning of "a spear" as well, and sorely was it to pierce her!

Abel, his brother, a name meaning, in Accadian, "a son," "a child," but in Hebrew, very fittingly, "a breath"

[1] *Das Buch Henoch*, Kap. xxv. 4.
[2] Ezek. ix. 3; x. 4, 18. Ps. xviii. 10.
[3] Gen. iv. 16.
[4] Ps. lxxx. 1.

and "vanity"; for his brief day and sad end were to show that life is, indeed, no better. When the first child came, Eve had a living miracle before her, which seemed to promise her as much future comfort as it gave her present delight. "She had gotten a man from Jehovah;" she had something to wean her mind from her great sorrow; something to love, watch over, and call out her fond endearments. But the bright morning was to be overclouded ere noon.

After a time, we are told, when the two had grown to be men, they chose their callings in life—Cain turning to agriculture; Abel to the simple pursuits of a pastoral life. No interval of "utter degeneracy" is sanctioned in the Scripture account of the first men; no dismal age of living on roots and shell fish, or the produce of the chase, as naked savages; they begin in Eden, to work it and watch it;[1] after the Fall they turn to the tillage of the field, and the rearing and tending of sheep;[2] occupations from which an advance to other forms of civilization was easy.

The two brothers, as often happens, grew up with very different natures: the elder, a sullen, self-willed, haughty, vindictive man; wanting the religious element in his character, and defiant even in his attitude toward God. Abel, it is implied, was the very reverse; the life he led, tending meek flocks, a type of his own character. Such opposite natures—pride and humility, fierceness and gentleness, could hardly live well together, for the one must have seemed a constant reproach to the other.

Long-brooding jealousy and dislike at last broke out into

[1] Gen. ii. 15. (Heb.)

[2] The word translated sheep, Gen. iv. 2, includes also goats—that is, "the smaller cattle."

a flame only too fatally. After a time,—literally, after days, perhaps on the Sabbath, or on the first day of the year,—the brothers brought, it may be to "The presence of the Lord" between the Cherubim, their offerings to Jehovah: the one, perchance, to thank Him for His blessing on field and flocks: the other in grateful acknowledgment of the fruits of harvest. Cain presented, as was common in later times, an offering of the growth and fruits of his land; Abel, of the first-born of his flocks, and of the fat,—which, in after ages also, was specially esteemed in sacrifices. No altar is mentioned, but one is necessarily implied. Cain, however, and his offering found no favour with God, while Abel and his were accepted, perhaps by fire descending on it from heaven. The state of heart in each towards God determined the result. Abel had loving faith[1] in God and His promise of mercy, and it is to be presumed that Cain had not; for, instead of lowly sorrow at his rejection, there burned in him the fiercest bitterness and indignation, so that "his countenance fell." "Why art thou wroth?" whispered God into his soul, as He does so often to us all, "and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well is not gladness (of countenance) thine? If with heart and deed thou seekest what is good, thou wilt have joy; but, if thou doest evil,—not only hast thou sadness; sin lies crouching, like a wild beast, at the door, to spring on thee and master thee, who shouldst master it."[2]

[1] Heb. xi. 4.

[2] Dillmann's and Ewald's Translations. See also Ges. *Thes.*, 714, p. 1259. Kamphausen (*Studien und Kritiken*, 1860, p. 120) paraphrases the passage as follows: "God thinks nothing of the outward worth of the gift, whether you bring what you think better than you have now offered, or present only thy field fruits which you wrongly think have caused your rejection by their not being acceptable. God looks only at the heart. Guide thyself by this in the future. But your heart, as your conscience tells you, is already so corrupt, that sin like a fierce beast threatens presently to destroy thee altogether." See Lenormant's *Origines*, p. 169. The story of Abel's death is wonderfully described in Byron's "Cain."

But the proud heart kept its grudge sullenly, and, in a fit of passion, soon after embrued the hands of the unhappy one in his brother's blood.

Some of the legends of the death of Abel are very touching. One day, says one of them, he was asleep on a mountain, and Cain took a stone and crushed his head. Then he threw the corpse on his back, and carried it about, not knowing what to do with it; but he saw two crows fighting, and one killed the other, on which the crow that lived dug a hole in the earth with his beak, and buried the dead bird. But Cain said, "I shall learn sense from this bird; I, too, will bury my brother in the ground." And he did so. "After Abel was slain," says another, "the dog which had kept his sheep guarded his body, and Adam and Eve sat beside it and knew not what to do. Then said a raven, whose friend was dead, 'I will teach Adam a lesson,' and he dug a hole in the soil, and laid his friend there, and covered him up. And when Adam saw it, he said to Eve, 'We will do the same with Abel,' and God rewarded the raven for this, by promising that none should ever injure its young, that it should always have meat in abundance, and that its prayer for rain should be immediately answered."[1]

Nothing could mark more vividly the progress of evil in the human heart than Cain's bearing after his crime, of which banishment from the home of Adam was the punishment. The land of Nod, to which he directed his steps, has been thought to be some remote eastern part of Asia, but the word only means "flight," or "banishment," and the most we know is that it was on the east of Eden. Thither he carried with him a sign by which he should feel

[1] *Pirke R. Eliezer*, c. xxi. *Koran*, cap. v.

himself safe from the avenger of blood, but what it was we cannot tell. Some say that his tongue turned white, others that he had a particular dress assigned him ; some that his face grew black : but others that he became covered with hair and that a horn grew out of his forehead. "The Holy One took one of the twenty-two letters which are in the law," says Rabbi Johanan, "and wrote it on the arm of Cain." Another Rabbi, however, puts it more touchingly, that the sign was a symbol of pardon set by God on his brow, after his deep penitence and contrition. Gesenius, less imaginatively, but more practically, translates it simply, that "God *gave* him a sign."[1]

The expulsion from Eden was already an event so distant, that children born to Adam, or, perhaps, even to his children, had grown into manhood, and a community had gradually been formed. A band from this fled with the banished one to Nod, and there the insecurity of their position led to the first gathering into town life ; which was now the more necessary, since the ground had been cursed as regarded Cain, and he had been doomed to be a wanderer and a fugitive in the earth. He hoped, it may be, to mitigate his lot by the fixity and protection of a central settlement. Poets have described the first city as vying with the glories of Babylon or Nineveh, but it is far more likely that a very lowly ideal would be nearer the truth. Macaulay[2] imagines it to have been very magnificent.

> From all its threescore gates the light
> Of gold and steel afar were thrown ;
> Two hundred cubits rose, in height,
> The outer wall of polished stone.
> On the top was ample space
> For a gallant chariot race.

[1] *Thesaurus*, p. 119.

[2] *The Marriage of Tirzah and Ahirad.*

Near either parapet a bed
Of the richest mould was spread.
Where, amidst flowers of every scent and hue,
Rich orange trees, and palms, and giant cedars grew.

Menials and guards; marble cisterns foaming with wine at great feasts; troops of dancing girls; chosen captains arrayed in glittering panoply, and all the splendour of a magnificent court, with armies, slaves, painted galleys, and the thousand wondrous details of Oriental greatness exalt the glory of its builder. At the marriage of his daughter Ahirad with the eldest born son of Seth, the royal halls display an—

. . . endless avenue of light,
The bowers of tulip, rose, and palm,
The thousand cressets fed with balm,
The silken vests, the boards piled high
With amber, gold, and ivory;
The crystal fount, whence sparkling flow
The richest wines o'er beds of snow,
The walls where blaze in living dyes
The king's three hundred victories.

* * * * *

With naked swords and shields of gold,
Stood the seven princes of the tribe of Nod;
Upon an ermine carpet lay
Two tiger cubs in furious play,
Beneath the emerald throne where sat the signed of God.[1]

But this, doubtless, is mere poetical licence. It is much more likely that "the city" was simply an aggregate of huts or tents, strengthened against attack from wild beasts by a rude stockade.[2] Legend, which has a wild licence, places the grave of Cain at Damascus. Riding along one

[1] The "sign" Macaulay paints as a "fierce and blood red light," like a star, which blazed on Cain's "ample forehead white."

[2] Ges., *Thes.*, p. 1005.

of the narrow streets of that city, I noticed, inside a high wall, a great cairn of small stones rising above it, and learned that it marked the spot where the first murderer was buried! "Enoch," the city built by Cain, has been identified by some with "Erech," the modern Warka, the Accadian name of that place being Unug, which certainly resembles the name of Cain's town.

A few names and one or two isolated and brief notices comprise all we really know of Cain and his descendants. Scripture had for its object to trace the development of the kingdom of God—not the history of outside nations. But the little recorded speaks of a condition far removed from rude and savage life. Cain's tilling the ground implies the use of corn and other cultivated plants; while Abel's sacrifice, and offering the fat as the selected portion, hints at the rest being taken as food; for the remains of sacrifices have in all ages been consumed by the offerers. Jewish and Mohammedan legends alike—refer the gift of the corn plants to the pity of God on Adam's repentance; Gabriel, it is said, having been sent to him with wheat from Paradise, and having taught him how to sow and reap it and make bread.[1] He showed him besides, continues the legend, how to slay a lamb in the name of God, to shear off the wool and skin the carcass, and then instructed Eve to spin and weave the wool.

It may be that the legend of Cain's repentance finds corroboration in the name of his first-born son Enoch, or Hanoch, which comes from two roots, "to teach" and "to consecrate." Perhaps the unhappy man, like many an ungodly parent since, wished that, whatever he was himself, his son at least should be religious. It may be

[1] Baring Gould's *Old Testament Legends*, vol. i. p. 56.

that he "consecrated" him to the God against whom he himself had so grievously sinned. But, on the other hand, the name may simply refer to Hanoch's being the first to teach men the culture of city life, or the elements of physical knowledge. Irad,[1] "the swift one," who comes next, points perhaps to a hunter's life, but it is also virtually the same as "Eridu," a very ancient city on the Persian Gulf, from which, perhaps, came the civilization and culture of Erech. Mehujael, "the stricken of God," hints darkly at further judgments for deepening corruption; but Methusael, in strong contrast, brings before us one who could be known as the "Champion of El;" as if, even among the race of Cain, God had not left Himself without a witness, if it do not mean, as some fancy, "the husband of the goddess (Istar)," so as really to be identical with Tammuz, the Sun-god, who had a shrine at Eridu. But with Lamech, "the striker down," "the wild man," a name for the Moon-god, a new flood-gate of evil is opened, for with Lamech begins polygamy. One wife had been created for Adam, and, hitherto, had been the rule; but "the wild man" takes two, and thus introduces a usage which, more than any other, corrupts society where it prevails. That it should have been thus ascribed to the race of Cain is significant; for though it afterwards existed in Israel, it was always the exception. The law permitted, but did not favour it; and even kings were forbidden to have many wives.[2] Lamech's family history gives us a momentary glimpse into these long dead ages. His one wife, Adah, shows in her name that "beauty" had already asserted its power;[3] but that of his other wife, Zillah,

[1] Yirad, Gen. iv. 18. [2] Deut. xvii. 17.
[3] It may, perhaps, however, mean "darkness."

seems to hint at the light from Eden having still lingered in a measure even in Nod, for it appears to mean that her "shade" or protector is none other than God. Such a shade was, indeed, sorely needed in those days of deepening evil, and it may be she sought it even amidst such an ungodly race.

Abel had already kept flocks, but only of sheep and goats, and had tended them in the pastures around his father's dwelling. But now, a son of Adah, Jabal—"the wanderer"—took to a purely pastoral life: which involved his passing from place to place with his herds of cattle, and it may be of asses and camels. Among these he necessarily had to live, and hence arose the movable tent, which nomads have used ever since. Her second son—Jubal, "the player,"—his very name an imitation of the lingering sound of his notes,—added to the charms of life the wondrous power of music; learned, perhaps, in the quiet shepherd life his brother had begun.[1] "He was the father," says the record, "of all such as use the lyre and the pipe." The sweet vibrations of stringed instruments, and the soft tones of the flute, in its earliest simplicity, must thus have waked delight in the very first generations of men. But Zillah, also, had a son; one, possibly, of many; whose gifts to the race, if in one light of priceless value, in their abuse were to be the symbol of immeasurable evil. Tubal-Cain, "the smith," was "a sharpener or hammerer out[2] of all cutting instruments of copper and iron;" the coulter of the plough, it may be, on the one hand, but on the other, the sword

[1] Jabal and Jubal are both from an Assyrian word, with which Abel also is connected. It means primarily "to bring down."

[2] Ges., *Thes.*, p. 530.

and spear. It is in keeping with the first mention of deadly weapons that their worst use is noticed as presently boasted. Armed by his son's invention, Lamech, "the wild man," the picture of a violent and darkening age, and the pitiless hero of the revengeful of after days, in his joy at his new weapons, cries aloud to his wives, in words which seem to have come down to us as a fragment of ancient song—

> Adah and Zillah![1] hear my speech,
> Ye wives of Lamech, mark my words:
> I have killed a man in return for a blow;
> A young man, in return for a stroke;
> Cain, they say, if killed, was to be revenged seven times,
> But Lamech (as this may show) will be revenged seventy times seven.[2]

The curtain falls on the race of Cain with this picture of savage ferocity, glorying in revenge, and merciless in its fury. What nations sprang from this earliest separation of the human family is not told us; for there is no hint, even in the names of Cain's descendants that have survived.

Scripture was more concerned with the story of another branch of the great stream of life; that of the race of Seth, whose name appears as that of a third son of Adam. The name means "a plant" or "shoot;" and Eve had the

[1] Condemnation of revenge and also of polygamy is the moral lesson of this snatch of fierce song. Adam has one wife; this descendant of Cain introduces the custom of having more than one, and that, fitly, on the eve of the Deluge. There is here a formal condemnation of this sin, just as in Gen. ii. 24, a Divine sanction is given to monogamy.

[2] I have paraphrased rather than closely translated the words. Gesenius (*Thes.*) translates it, "I have killed a man on account of a wound inflicted on me, a young man for the blow (he gave me)." S. de Sacy's version is, "I have slain a man because he had wounded me, and a young man because he had bruised me."

great joy to find that he grew up to inherit Abel's spirit. In due time he himself had a son, Enos, "a man," who was destined to mark a permanent and mighty advance in the future religious history of the world. Eve had spoken of God as Elohim; with Enos men began to worship him as Jehovah.[1] Cain and Abel had worshipped with offerings and sacrifices; perhaps in some rude sanctuary, outside the door of which sin still crouched in secret, to spring on them again. Enos introduces public supplication; for we can scarcely doubt that men had already called upon God in private. The form was now, once again, quickened by the spirit of religion, which was henceforth owned as not only a ceremonial act, but an inner life.

The descendants of Adam through Seth are given in ten generations; but when we remember that, in the genealogies of our Lord, St. Matthew reckons only twenty-eight steps from David to the Incarnation, while St. Luke gives us forty-three, it is easy to fancy that many may have been omitted in this case also. To Enos, "man," we are told, was born Cainan, "my child;" to Cainan, Mahalaleel, "El (God) is His glory;" to him, Jared,[2] perhaps "the swift one;" to him, again, Enoch, the same name as that of a son of Cain; but in this case "the teacher," "the consecrated one," in a worthy sense; for while tradition ascribes to him the instruction of mankind in human science, Scripture speaks of him as so exceptionally holy, that, like Elijah afterwards, he was spared the pains of death, and taken while still alive to God. Like Abel he died early, for shortness of life is far from marking Divine

[1] Gen. iv. 26. The word translated "the Lord," when it begins with a capital letter, in our A.V. is always "Jehovah" in the Hebrew.

[2] Jared is different in spelling from Irad, the grandson of Cain, but they seem to come from the same root.

displeasure. "He was not found," says the sacred writer, "because God had translated him;" words which evidently imply a belief in our immortality, at least among the race of Seth, from the very first.[1]

If Enoch's life was shorter than that of any other patriarch, the blessing on the household of the righteous was abundantly illustrated in Methuselah, who is recorded as having lived 969 years. Whether we are to think that the original vitality of the human frame faded only by slow degrees; or whether there was something salubrious in the air of the ages after Eden, has often been asked, but can never be answered. Some have fancied that the immense lives ascribed to the antediluvians imply that each name represents a tribe, the lives of whose leading members are added together; others have understood the years to mean only months; while others have sought to prove that from Adam to Abraham the year had no more than three months, from Abraham to Joseph eight, and from Joseph's time twelve months, as at present.[2] But such explanations have no sufficient warrant, and it is perhaps best, on the whole, to keep in mind what Bishop Harold Browne has pointed out; that "numbers and dates are liable in the course of ages to become obscured and exaggerated."[3] It is quite possible that some of the early Rabbis, desirous of emulating the fabled age ascribed by heathen nations to their heroes and demigods, may have added to the Bible figures, so as to secure the patriarchs an equal honour. Our present bodies, certainly, could not

[1] The Book of Enoch, from which I have elsewhere quoted freely, is sufficient proof of the superstitious reverence in which the great patriarch's name was held even by the later Jews.

[2] Von Bohlen's *Die Genesis*, pp. 65-67. *Aids to Faith*, p. 270. Kalisch, *On Genesis*, p. 110. Knobel, *Die Genesis*, p. 69.

[3] *Speaker's Commentary*, vol. i. p. 62.

live more than two hundred years, at the very most, from the decay of one part after another, and hence we must either take Bishop Browne's solution of antediluvian longevity, or suppose that exceptional circumstances in the first ages produced exceptional results.

Methuselah, perhaps the same as Methusael, or, perhaps, "the man of the spear" or "of the bow," a strange name for the son of the heavenly-minded Enoch, is followed by a second Lamech; but whether his name, "the wild man," or "the plunderer," throws any light on his character and life is not told us. All we know is, that from him sprang one who was to find favour with God in the midst of a world from which good had well-nigh departed. It is, indeed, perhaps to this well-nigh universal corruption that Methuselah and Lamech owe their names. It was a sad time. The earth, cursed by God, bore its harvests, as now, only after weary toil. The almost spontaneous fruitfulness of Eden had been lost, and Lamech might well look forward to the help to be rendered by his new-born son Noah, as "a comfort" to him, in lightening his toil. Little, however, did he dream what that son should see ere he died![1]

[1] It is curious to notice how widely the number ten prevails as that of the first generations of men. The Bible reckons ten from Creation to the Flood. The Iranians had ten kings, "the men of the ancient law," who lived on the pure homa or immortal draught of the gods, and kept their purity. Among the Hindoos there are ten "Fathers," the children of Brahma. Among the Germans and Scandinavians there were ten ancestors of Odin. Among the Chinese, ten emperors shared divine honour before the dawn of history, and the Arabs have ten fabled kings of the region between the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf.

The similarity in the two lists of the first generations of men through Adam by Cain on the one side, and through Seth by Enos on the other, has often attracted attention. They stand as follows:

Through Adam.	Through Enos.
Adam = The man.	Enos = The man.
Qaïn (Cain).	Qenan (Cainan).
Hanoch (Enoch).	Mahalalcel.

Through Adam.	Through Enos.
Yirad (Irad).	Yered (Jared).
Me'huiaël (Mehujael).	Hanoch (Enoch).
Methushaël (Methusael).	Methushela'h (Methuselah).
Lemech (Lamech).	Lemech (Lamech).
Yabal. Yubal. Thubal.	Noah.
(Jabal). (Jubal). (Tubal).	Shem. Ham. Yapheth (Japheth).

These names have an entirely different meaning in the two lists: an unfavourable one in that through Cain; a favourable one in that through Seth. Thus Me'huiael, "smitten of God," corresponds to Mahalaleel, "praise or splendour of God." Yirad, the "fugitive," is the counterpart of Yered, "descent," or rather "service." Hanoch means, in both lists, "initiator," "teacher," but in the one list it is initiator into material and profane arts; in the other, into religious truth and spiritual life. It is to be remembered, however, that the etymologies of some of these names are variously given.

In his *Origines de l'Histoire*, Lenormant finds in the name of the Assyrian month Sivan the month of bricks—and the fact that its zodiacal sign is The Twins, a reminiscence of Cain's fratricide, and of the founding of the first city. Phœnician tradition speaks of the first men as having invented bricks mixed with chopped straw, and dried in the sun. There are many cities in antiquity, with the founding of which the murder of a brother is associated. The word "Robetz" = lieth (Gen. iv. 7), is related to the Assyrian "Rabitz," a class of demons who hide and spring on their victim. Evil spirits were imagined as often lying hidden at the door of a house, ready to leap on a man when he came out unsuspectingly.

CHAPTER X.

THE FLOOD.

It is one of the most remarkable, and at the same time pleasing, corroborations of the early narratives of Scripture, that they are found to be repeated, in substance, often with surprising exactness of detail, by the traditions and primitive records of the most widely separated countries and races. This is especially seen in the echoes of the story of the Flood, which meet us from every age and region.

The notice of this appalling and unique catastrophe, which has thus imprinted itself on the memory of the world from the most ancient times, is fitly introduced by a statement of the condition of things among mankind, which drew down such an awful punishment. Evil had grown rampant, and threatened utterly to extirpate good from the world. The immediate cause of this portentous corruption is, moreover, stated; though in language so dark, from its metaphorical expression, that endless controversy has risen as to the meaning of some essential words. "There were giants on the earth," it is said, "in those days;" but the name means only "famous" men, whether for stature or deeds, though they may have been of unusual size. Some races, especially when the enervating influences of an artificial civilization have not deteriorated them, have shown this peculiarity in historic times; as, for example, the Cimbri and Teutons of

antiquity, and the Pomeranians of the present day. It is added that "the sons of God" allied themselves with "the daughters of men," and that their children became mighty and renowned men.[1] By the "giants," or "nephilim," seem to be meant a race of violent chiefs, who made themselves great names by deeds of war, filling the earth with violence. They may have been of gigantic size, like those to whom the same name is afterwards applied in Palestine,[2] but it is not necessarily implied.[3] Opinions have differed greatly as to the meaning of the name "Sons of God," or rather, of "Elohim." The Rabbis, as was natural, from their love of the marvellous, took for granted that the fallen angels are meant; since "nephilim" is derived from the verb "to fall." Hence apocryphal Jewish literature assumes this constantly, while not a few writers of the most opposite schools still support this explanation, which, nevertheless, seems fanciful and ungrounded. The giants are not said to have been "the sons of Elohim," and their name may as fitly be explained as referring to their "falling upon" their fellow-men, as by any mysterious connection with the rebel angels. Nor does the name "sons of Elohim," necessarily refer to angels at all; for the word Elohim is used, elsewhere, in Scripture, of men. Thus, in Psalm lxxxii. 1, we read that God "judges in the midst of the Elohim," who are shown in the next verse to be those who "judge unjustly, and accept the persons of the

[1] Gen. vi. 4.

[2] Deut. ii. 10 ff., 20; iii. 11. Amos ii. 9; etc.

[3] It has been suggested that the application of the same name to a race in Palestine argues that they were descendants from the "giants" of Gen. vi. It is not, however, their historical name, but one simply pointing out a physical characteristic, not confined to any one people. If we were to call the Patagonians "giants," it would not make them descendants of those so called in Genesis. There is hence no proof from this, as has been fancied, that others besides Noah and his family survived the Flood.

wicked."[1] The name is evidently given them from their office; in which they represented, in Israel, the supreme judge of the nation—Jehovah. Jewish interpreters generally adopt this meaning of the passage: believing that the "great" or "mighty" sons of Cain are contrasted with the lowlier daughters of Seth.[2] It is, moreover, very doubtful if the word be ever applied in the Old Testament to angels. On the other hand, it is continually used of heathen idols, and hence it may well point in this particular case to intermarriages between the adherents of idolatry[3] and the daughters of the race of Seth, and a consequent spread of heathenism, far and near, with its attendant violence and moral debasement.[4] If, however, by "the sons of Elohim" we understand the worshippers of Jehovah, the "daughters of men" would mean those of the race of Cain. This interpretation, indeed, is now very generally adopted, and seems the most natural. We should, then, read, "the sons of the godly race" took wives of "the daughters of men."

The children of such marriages sadly increased the prevailing corruption. They became "*gibborim*," or fierce and cruel chiefs, filling the world with blood and tumult. It was to prevent the final triumph of evil, Scripture tells us, that the Deluge was sent from God. "My Spirit," said

[1] Elohim is applied to judges in 1 Sam. ii. 25. The idea of angels being intended by the "sons of God," is not in any measure an Asiatic, far less a Hebrew conception. It is simply a piece of Greek Polytheism. Macaulay, in his poem, *The Marriage of Tirzah and Ahirad*, has the same idea as Hirsch.

[2] Ruetschi, in *Herzog*, vol. xiii. p. 40.

[3] The use of "son" for "disciple," or "worshipper," is common in Scripture. Thus, "the sons of the prophets." The Jews are often called "the sons of God," Isaiah i. 2; xliii. 6. Jer. iii. 14, 19. It was the same with other nations. Benhadad means the son or worshipper of Hadad, the chief divinity of the Syrians. The disciples of the Magi in Persia were called their "sons," and the same usage was common among the Greeks. The Syrians also spoke of the sons, or disciples, of Bardesanes. The godly are called in Malachi ii. 15, the children, or seed, of Elohim.

[4] See Schenkel, in *Bibel Lexicon*, art. Nephilim.

Jehovah, "shall not strive with man forever, for that he, also, is flesh; yet shall his days be an hundred and twenty years;" or, as the Greek Bible renders the passage: "My Spirit shall certainly not remain among these men forever, because they are flesh, but their days shall be an hundred and twenty years." These ominous words are hard to understand; but it may be that their force is, as has been held, that "God's Spirit—that is, conscience, the voice of God—will more and more lose its power in the earth. Evil will more and more prevail, because men are only flesh, now—that is, corrupt. Yet I shall delay my wrath for one hundred and twenty years."

That such a terrible and all-destructive visitation happened, is corroborated, as has been said, by the traditions of all races. Among these, the most famous, perhaps, are the Chaldæan, which are preserved in fragments of Berosus, a priest of Babylon, who lived about two hundred and sixty years before Christ; and also on the tablets recovered from the ruins of Nineveh.

The account of Berosus is, practically, that of the Chaldæan tablets, with a variation in the names of the personages in the legend, and the omission of some particulars; so that it will be enough to give the version of the tablets. The story is related by the patriarch Khasisatra, who has been saved from the deluge, to Gis-dubar, a hero, who, having been smitten with leprosy, goes to the distant land to which the gods have transported Khasisatra, to consult him as to a cure. There are three copies of the tablets on which the legend is given, all made by order of the same king of Assyria, Assurbanipal, in the seventh century B.C., from a very ancient original in the priestly library of Erech, a town founded in the early days of the first Chal-

dæan empire. This venerable copy could not have been of later date than seventeen centuries B.C., but probably was older; so that it carries us back beyond the time of Moses, perhaps even to Abraham's day. Nor is this all, for the variations in the three existing copies prove that the one from which they were transcribed had itself been taken from a still older manuscript, of which the original text had received interlinear comments. Some of the copyists have introduced these into the text: others have omitted them; and the narrative is thus carried back to an age which may well be believed contemporary with the survivors of the Flood itself, so that it is thus one of the oldest documents as yet known.

"I will reveal to thee, O Gisdubar," says the legend, "the history of my preservation, and tell thee the oracle of the gods. The town of Surrippak, as thou knowest, is on the Euphrates. It was already ancient, when the gods within it set their hearts to bring on a deluge, even the great gods, as many as these are—their father Anu their king, the warrior Bel, their throne-bearer Adar, their prince En-nugi. Ea, the god of Wisdom, sat along with them and repeated their decree: 'Man of Surrippak . . . build a vessel and finish it [quickly]. The gods will destroy the seed of life, but do thou live, and cause thou to go up into the vessel the seed of life of every kind. The vessel thou shalt build . . . cubits shall be the measure of its length, and . . . the measure of its breadth and its height.

"'[Launch it] thus on the ocean, and cover it with a roof.' I understood, and said to Ea, 'My lord, [the vessel] that thou commandest me to build thus, when I shall build it, young and old [shall laugh at me].' [Ea opened his mouth and] spoke: '[If they laugh at thee] thou shalt

say to them, He who has insulted me [shall be punished], [for the protection of the gods] is over me.' 'I will exercise my judgment on that which is on high and that which is below. . . .

"'[But as for thee] shut [not] the door [until] the time come of which I shall send thee word. Then enter the door of the ship and bring into it thy grain, thy property, thy provisions, thy family, thy menservants, thy maidservants, and thy young people—the cattle of the field, and the wild beasts of the plain, as many as I will preserve, I will send to thee and they shall be kept behind thy door.' . . . On the fifth day [the two sides of the bark] were raised. Its sides and covering were in each fourteen measures. I placed its roof and I covered it. I divided it into compartments; I divided its passages into seven. I divided its interior into seven chambers. I stopped up the chinks through which the water entered in. I poured on the outside three sari of bitumen, and three sari of bitumen within. Three sari of men, porters, brought on their heads the baskets of provisions. I kept a saros for the nourishment of my family, and the mariners divided among them sari. For [provision] I had oxen slain; I appointed rations for each day. In the ship I collected stores of beer, food, and wine, [in quantity] like the waters of a river; [of provisions] in quantity like the dust of the earth.

"With the help of Samas (the Sun-god) the dividing of the ship into compartments was finished: all parts were made strong and I caused the tackling to be carried above and below. All that I possessed I gathered together—of silver, of gold; of the seed of life of every kind. I made my servants, male and female, the cattle of the fields, the

wild beasts of the plain, and the sons of the people, all ascend [into the ship].

"Samas [the Sun-god] fixed the time, and he announced it in these terms: 'In the night I will cause it to rain destruction from heaven; enter into the vessel and close the door.' . . . When the evening of the day arrived I was afraid. I entered into my vessel and shut my door, and then confided the ship to the pilot with all that it contained.

"Mu-seri-ina-namari[1] rose from the horizon of heaven like a black cloud; Ramman[2] thundered in the midst of it —Nebo and the Wind-god marched before:—the throne-bearers passed over the mountain and plain. Nergal, the mighty, swept away the wicked; Adar[3] advanced, overthrowing all before him. The spirits of the deep let loose the flood: in their terribleness they swept over the earth. The flood of Ramman[2] swelled up to the sky, and all light was turned to darkness. They destroyed all life from the face of the earth. The terrible deluge swelled up towards heaven. The brother no longer saw his brother; men no longer knew each other. In heaven the gods feared the flood and sought a refuge. They mounted up to Anu [the upper heaven of the fixed stars]. (There) they crouched down like dogs in a kennel (in their terror). Ishtar wailed like a child; (she) the great goddess, spoke thus: 'All mankind has returned to clay, and the evil I foretold in presence of the gods has come upon them. . . . I am the mother who gave birth to men, and, lo, they fill the sea like the spawn of fish, and the gods on their thrones weep with me, by reason of that which the spirits of the

[1] A personification of rain. [2] The god of thunder.
[3] The Chaldee and Assyrian Hercules.

deep are doing.' The gods on their thrones were in tears, with their lips covered, because of the evil to come.

"Six days passed, and as many nights; the wind, the flood, and the deluge-rain went on overwhelming all things. At the approach of the seventh day the deluge-rain grew weaker, the terrible floods which had fought against men grew calm, the sea began to dry up, and the wind and the flood came to an end. I looked at the sea, attentively observing, and the whole race of men was turned to clay; the corpses floated like sea-weed. I opened the window and the light smote on my face. I was seized with sadness; I sat down and wept, and the tears came over my face.

NOAH IN THE ARK, WITH MYTHOLOGICAL FIGURES (THE GODS BY WHOM THE FLOOD HAD BEEN SENT?) FROM AN EARLY BABYLONIAN CYLINDER.

"I looked at the regions bounding the sea, towards the twelve points of the horizon, but there was no land. The vessel was borne above the land of Nizir—the mountain of Nizir arrested the vessel, and did not permit it to pass over. For six days they thus stopped it. At the approach of the seventh day I sent out and loosed a dove. The dove went and returned, and found no place to light on, and came back. I sent out and loosed a swallow; and it went and returned, and finding no place to light on,

came back. I sent out and loosed a raven; the raven went, and saw the corpses on the waters; it ate, it flew away, rested, and came not back.

"I then sent out [the creatures in the vessel] towards the four winds, and offered a sacrifice. I raised an altar for my burnt-offering on the peak of the mountain. Seven by seven I set the measured vessels,[1] and, beneath, I spread rushes, cedar-wood, and spices. The gods smelt the savour: they gathered like flies over the sacrifice. From afar, in approaching, the great goddess lighted up the rainbow made by Anu for the glory of the gods. Them, filled, like crystal, with light I will never forget. I prayed in that day that I might never forget them. May they come to my altar! But may Bel never come to it, for he gave reins to his anger and made the flood, and sent (the race of) man, my children, to the pit!

"But when Bel, drawing near from afar, saw the vessel, he stopped, and was filled with anger against the gods and the spirits of heaven. 'No one,' cried he, 'shall come out alive! No man shall be preserved from the pit!' Then Adar opened her mouth, and said to the warrior, Bel—'Who but Ea should speak thus, for Ea possesses knowledge, and he (speaks forth) all.' Next Ea opened his mouth and said to Bel, the warrior, 'O thou warrior, prince of the gods, thou warrior, why didst thou not master thyself: why hast thou caused this flood? Let the sinner bear the weight of his sins: the blasphemer that of his blasphemy, but let not the just prince be cut off, let not the faithful be destroyed. Instead of thy making a new deluge, let lions and hyænas appear and reduce the number of men; let there be famine, and let the earth be [devas-

[1] Vessels or vases with measured contents, for the offering.

tated]; let the plague appear, and let men be mown down. I have not revealed the decision of the great gods: to Sisuthros alone I sent a dream, and he heard what the gods had decided.'

"Then when his resolve [to destroy the remnant of men] was arrested, Bel entered into the vessel, and took my hand, and made me rise. He made my wife, also, rise, and place herself at my side; then turned towards us, and joined himself to us by a covenant, and blessed us in these words: 'Hitherto Sisuthros has been mortal, but now he and his wife are raised to be like the gods, and he will live afar, at the mouth of the rivers.' Then they (the gods) carried me away and gave me to dwell in a remote place, at the mouths of the rivers"—that is, in the region beyond the fall of the great rivers of Chaldæa into the Persian Gulf, which in those distant ages was regarded as another world.

Such is the most perfect translation of this wonderful legend, from which only a few words of repetition have been omitted. Its points of resemblance and of contrast with the Bible narrative appear on the surface. Nothing is said in Scripture of the burial of writings, and there is no trace of the polytheism which disfigures the legend. In the tablets, instead of a simple patriarch like Noah, we have a king; and instead of a single family alone being saved, we have friends, servants, and young people in the ark, with all the royal treasures. In the tablets the deluge lasted only six days and nights, in Genesis it lasted forty days and nights, and it was, in all, a hundred and fifty days before the waters had disappeared. In the Bible it is said that seven pairs of clean beasts were taken and one pair of unclean; in the Chaldæan accounts there is no mention of clean or unclean. Samas (the Sun-god) is represented as

saying, "Enter into the vessel and close the door." The Bible says, "And Jehovah shut him in." The Chaldæan account has a pilot; there is none in that of Genesis; but in both the ark is coated with bitumen. According to the tablets, there were let loose a dove, a swallow, and a raven; in Genesis, a raven and a dove. In the tablets and Genesis, alike, the rainbow appears as the sign of Divine satisfaction with a sacrifice offered after the flood had passed off, and in both there is an assurance that the earth should never again be visited with the same form of destruction. The issue, however, is different with regard to those saved. On the tablets some are taken away by the gods; in Genesis they remain alive to re-people the earth. The Chaldæan accounts had evidently mingled the story of Enoch with that of Noah.

We have thus an independent tradition, of the highest antiquity, recording the fact of a great deluge having destroyed all the human race except a favoured few, and that as a punishment for their sins. But this tradition, though like Scripture in some points, is yet distinct from it in its whole spirit and tone; for though both come from the same region and from times equally remote, they have done so through different races.

In the essay, "On the Syrian Goddess," formerly attributed to Lucian, we learn the version of this Chaldæan tradition which was current among the Syrians, and through them introduced to the West, among the Greeks and Romans. "When I asked how old this temple was" (that of the Syrian goddess, at Hierapolis, 'The Sacred City,' five days' journey from Antioch on the highway to Mesopotamia), says the writer, "and to what goddess in their opinion it had been consecrated, I received many explanations,

in secret and openly; some out of the way, but others at one with the Greek opinion. Most said that Deucalion from Scythia, in whose days the terrible flood happened, had founded it. Now, I have heard the history of Deucalion from the Greeks, who say that the present race of men is not the first—since the first had been utterly destroyed—but had sprung from Deucalion. The original race, they say, were violent people, guilty of much that was wrong; keeping neither their oath nor observing hospitality, and showing pity on no one; for which they were sorely punished. The earth, in fact, opened and poured out much water; terrible rains fell; the floods rose over their banks, and the sea widened its shores, till the waters covered all things and the human race perished. Deucalion alone survived, on account of his wisdom and piety, to restore the family of mankind. The way he escaped was this: He built a great ark, in which he put his wives and children, and into which he also himself went. At the same time there came swine, horses, lions, serpents, and all other beasts which the earth nourished, and he received them all into the ark. There, they did him no harm, for there was a great friendship among all, which Jupiter put in their hearts, and thus they lived in the ark as long as the waters lasted. This is the story the Greeks tell of Deucalion. The Hierapolitans add to it something very wonderful. They say that a great cleft opened in their land, which swallowed up all the waters, and that, after this, Deucalion built altars and raised a temple to Juno, over the cleft. I have seen it; it is very narrow and situated under the temple. Whether it was once large and had now shrunk, I do not know; but I have seen it, and it is quite small. Nowadays they bring water twice a year to the temple; not only the priests, but

a great multitude of people from all Syria, Arabia, and from beyond the Euphrates, going to the sea and fetching it. They then pour it out first in the temple, from which it runs off into the cleft. They do this, they say, in obedience to a command of Deucalion, in remembrance of the calamity suffered and of the escape vouchsafed."

A passage in the Bhagawata, one of the sacred books of India, is no less striking. The whole earth, we are told, was covered with a deluge, and all men destroyed, except the then reigning king, with seven holy men and their wives. And it happened in this way: The king was making his legal washing one day in a river, when the god Vishnu appeared to him and told him that in seven days all creatures who had done him wrong should be destroyed by a flood. "Thou, however," the god continued, "shalt be saved in a roomy, wonderfully built vessel. Take, therefore, all kinds of wholesome plants and grain for food, and also the seven holy men; your own wives, and a pair of all kinds of animals. Go without fear into the ark, for thou shalt see me face to face, and all thy questions will be answered." After seven days the sea rose over its bounds, and then the prince saw a great vessel floating on the waters. Into this he entered, following carefully the commands of Vishnu, who, in the form of a great fish, dragged along the ark by means of a great sea-serpent, which he used as a rope. A demon had stolen the Vedas from Brahma, but after the flood Vishnu killed him; and, having got the Vedas back, taught the king heavenly wisdom from them, and appointed him to be the king of the new world.[1]

[1] This is the version given by Rosenmüller. A shorter one of a more heathen tone has been given by Max Müller, from another Indian source. See *Contemporary Review* (Nov., 1879), p. 477.

There are, in all, four versions of the tradition of the Flood known in Indian literature, but it has been pointed out by Eugene Burnouf, that it does not occur in the Vedic hymns, the most ancient Sanscrit writings, and that it seems to have been a foreign importation, of Semitic, or, rather, Babylonian, origin, in very remote, but still historical times. The metamorphosis of Vishnu into a fish is, itself, a strong corroboration of this, for there is no trace of fish worship in India, and no similar legend or allusion in its mythology. But the fish-god was a prominent deity in Babylon. The image of the god Ea who plays so prominent a part in the Chaldæan legends of the Flood, almost invariably combines the form of a man and a fish, like the god Dagon, which was an importation from Mesopotamia to the shores of Palestine. The similarity of the Indian tradition to that of Genesis, in the numbers given, is striking. Vishnu gives the warning, "In seven days all creatures shall be destroyed," while Scripture says, "Yet seven days and I will cause it to rain upon the earth." "In seven days the sea rose above its bounds," says the Purana: "After seven days the waters of the flood were upon the earth," says Genesis. In the same way, on the tablets, the flood begins on the evening of the seventh day, and commences to abate after seven days. Such a repeated use of the same number seems a further reason for believing the Indian tradition to have come from the same region as the legend on the tablets and the account in Genesis.

But if this tradition came originally from the Euphrates, the traditions of other races show versions so entirely distinct, that they cannot be held to have been borrowed from Hebrew or Chaldæan sources. All the Aryan races had

their own—the ancient Persians, the Greeks, the Celts, the Scandinavians. "They say," says Plutarch, repeating the Greek tradition, "that a dove let out from the ark by Deucalion, showed by its return to him that the waters were abating; and again, by its not returning, that the skies had cleared." The Egyptians, to whom a flood was too like the beneficent overflow of the Nile to be the supreme image of a great calamity, such as other races considered it, have no tradition of a Deluge, but, as M. Naville says, they spoke of a time when the greater part of mankind were destroyed by the wrath of the gods. Men, said a myth, had once offended Ra, their creator, the Sun-god, and he sent the goddess Hathor, to slay them, which she did till the earth was covered, over wide spaces, with their blood. Then he himself came, and drank 7,000 cups of wine, made from the growth of Egypt and mingled with the blood of the slain, and his heart rejoiced. But he stayed the slaughter, and made an oath that he would never again destroy mankind. The foes of Ra had been slaughtered, and the god returned to heaven, where he created Elysium and peopled the stars.

CHAPTER XI.

THE FLOOD (*continued*).

It is a singular confirmation of the Deluge as a great historical event, that it is thus found engraven in the memories of all the great nations of antiquity; but it is still more striking to find it holding a place in the traditions of the most widely spread races of America, and indeed of the world at large.

The ancient inhabitants of Mexico had many variations of the legend among their various tribes. In some, rude paintings were found representing the Deluge. Not a few believed that a vulture was sent out of the ship, and that, like the raven of the Chaldæan tablets, it did not return, but fed on the dead bodies of the drowned. Other versions say that a humming-bird alone, out of many birds sent off, returned with a branch covered with leaves in its beak. Among the Cree Indians of the present day in the Arctic Circle, in North America, Sir John Richardson found similar traces of the great tradition. "The Crees," he says, "spoke of a universal Deluge, caused by an attempt of the fish to drown one who was a kind of demigod, with whom they had quarrelled. Having constructed a raft, he embarked with his family, and all kinds of birds and beasts. After the flood had continued some time, he ordered several waterfowls to dive to the bottom, but they were all drowned. A musk rat, however, having been sent on the same errand,

was more successful, and returned with a mouthful of mud." From other tribes in every part of America, travellers have brought many variations of the same world-wide tradition, nor are even the scattered islands of the Great Southern Ocean without versions of their own. In Tahiti, the natives used to tell of the god Ruahatu having told two men, "who were at sea, fishing—Return to the shore, and tell men that the earth will be covered with water, and all the world will perish. To-morrow morning go to the islet Toamarama ; it will be a place of safety for you and your children. Then Ruahatu caused the sea to cover the lands. All were covered, and all men perished except the two and their families."[1] In other islands we find legends recording the building of an altar after the Deluge ; the collection of pairs of all the domestic animals, to save them, while the Fiji islanders give the number of the human beings saved, as *eight*.[2]

Thus, the story of the Deluge is a universal tradition among all branches of the human family, with the one exception of the black.[3] How else could this arise but from the ineradicable remembrance of a real and terrible event ? It must, besides, have happened so early in the history of mankind that the story of it could spread with the race from their original cradle, for the similarity of the versions over the earth points to a common source. It is, moreover, preserved in its fullest and least diluted form among the three great races, which are the ancestors of the three great

[1] Gaussin, *Du Dialecte de Tahiti*, etc., p. 255. See also Ellis' *Polynesian Researches*, vol. ii. pp. 57-59.

[2] Hardwick's *Christ and other Masters*, pt. iii. p. 185.

[3] Lenormant, one of the most learned men of France, a devout believer in Christianity, and a resolute defender of the Scriptures, says : "Africa has no traditions of the Flood."

families of mankind—the Aryans, from whom sprang the populations of India, Persia, and Europe; the Turanians; and the Semitic stock, who were the progenitors of the Jew, the Arab, and other related races, including the Cushite and Egyptian. These, it is striking to note, were the specially civilized peoples of the early world, and must have learned the story before they separated from their common home in Western Asia. "Like certain families of the vegetable kingdom," says Humboldt, thoughtfully, in reference to this subject, "which, notwithstanding the diversity of climate and the influence of heights, retain the impression of a common type, these traditions of nations display everywhere the same physiognomy, and preserve features of resemblance that fill us with astonishment. How many different tongues, belonging to branches that appear completely distinct, transmit to us the same fact! The bases of the traditions concerning races that are destroyed, and the renewal of nature, scarcely vary; though every nation gives them a local colouring. In the great continents as in the smallest islands of the Pacific Ocean, it is always on the loftiest and nearest mountain that the remains of the human race have been saved; and this event appears the more recent, in proportion as the nations are uncultivated, and as the knowledge they have of their own existence has not a very remote date."

The precise shape of the ark has been the subject of no little controversy. The Hebrew word for it is apparently Egyptian,[1] and is translated in the Greek version by the word for a wooden box, chest, or coffer,[2] while in the Vulgate it is called an ark; that is, a chest. The Egyptian word means a chest, or coffer, or sarcophagus;

[1] Hebrew, Tabah. Old Egyptian, Teb, Tebh, Tep. [2] Kibōtos.

so that all agree in the idea of a vessel four cornered, like a box; if we are to understand them literally. J. D. Michaelis, however, with his delight in new opinions and his vivid acuteness, was very unwilling to think it could have been a mere chest, "which could hardly float on the sea, and stood in imminent danger of being whirled round and round by the waves." "Kibōtos—the Greek word"—says he, "had, assuredly, various meanings at Alexandria. For example, a part of the harbour bore that name, but in common Greek it especially means a coffin or sarcophagus. Could it have meant in Alexandria, first a sarcophagus, and then a Nile-boat of about the proportions after which Noah's ship was built? The old Egyptians bore corpses on boats to the place of burial; the boatman was called Charon, and the fable of Charon's boat is in some degree of Egyptian origin, while the name —Charon's Sea—still survives in Egypt. Still more, whoever has seen a mummy knows that the coffin or chest in which it lies is like a long boat, though from the thickness of the wood in the middle it has not the exact proportions of Noah's ark. Perhaps the Greek translators meant by Kibōtos a Nile-boat, named from such a mummy coffin."[1]

He then goes on to remark, that, "In the beginning of the previous century—the seventeenth—a ship had been built with a rounded hull, after the proportions given in the sixth chapter of Genesis, and it had been found, to the astonishment of all, that these proportions, given in the oldest book in the world, were precisely the most advantageous for safety, for stowage, and even for swiftness!" "George Horn," he continues, "Professor of History at

[1] *Orientalische und exegetische Bibliothek* (1781), vol. xviii. p. 22.

Leyden in the last century, in his *Compendium of Universal History*, gives the name of a person who had seen this ship, which was called *Noah's Ark*. At the time of the truce between the Spaniards and the Dutch, in 1609, there lived at Hoorn, in North Holland, a Mennonist, Peter Jansen, who took the notion that he would build a ship of the same proportions as Noah's ark, only smaller; that is, 120 feet long, 20 feet broad, and 12 high. While it was building every one laughed at him; but, Dutchman-like, he kept sturdily on, and found, in the end, that it justified his expectations. For, when launched, it proved to be able to bear a third more freight than other ships of the same measurement, required no more hands to manage it than they, and sailed far faster. The result was that the Dutch built many others like it, calling them Noah's arks, and they only ceased to be used after the close of the truce, in 1621, because they could not carry cannon, and thus were not safe against privateers or pirates."[1]

The ark is said, in Genesis,[2] to have rested on the *mountains* of Ararat; not on a mountain *called* Ararat, as we generally assume. The word, in the Assyrian inscriptions, is a name for Armenia, but there is no hint of any particular mountain bearing the name.[3] The special district meant, which, indeed, still bears the ancient name,[4] is one bounded, on the south, by a high chain of mountains on the middle course of the Araxes, a river flowing into the Caspian. In later times the name was given to the mountains themselves, and especially to their highest summit, which rises 16,254 feet above the

[1] *Orientalische und exegetische Bibliothek* (1781), vol. xviii. p. 28.
[2] Chap. viii. 4.
[3] Schrader, E., *Die Keilinschriften und das Alte Testament*, p. 10.
[4] Gesenius' *Heb. Handwörterbuch* (8th ed., 1878), p. 77.

sea, and has long been known as the Greater Mount Ararat, while another peak close by, 4,000 feet lower, is called the Lesser Ararat. This, however, is an incorrect transference of the name; arising no doubt from the translation of the Hebrew words in the Bible, by "the mountains of Ararat," instead of "the mountains of the country of Ararat." In Isaiah xxxvii. 38, the Hebrew words, "the land of Ararat,"[1] are translated, "land of Armenia," and so, in 2 Kings xix. 37.

The mountain now known as Ararat is an almost isolated volcanic cone, and has been ascended by Europeans at various times; the last who reached its summit being Professor Bryce, of Oxford, who found the upper parts often difficult to climb, from the softness of the ashy rock. There is, however, no crater. Strange to say, the mountain has considerably altered in shape since 1840; an earthquake having loosened part of it and hurled it down.[2] Its name in Armenia is Massis, not Ararat. Snow lies on the top, but it is not at all necessary to suppose that the ark rested on any but a comparatively low point of the range of which it forms a part. The Syrian tradition places the spot in Kurdistan, in the same region, though more to the southwest; but the texts of Isaiah and Kings already quoted are opposed to this being the locality.[3]

It is a curious fact that the oleaster, which may well have supplied the "olive leaf" of Noah's dove, grows profusely in the district of Ararat.[4]

The EXTENT of the Deluge has long been a subject of

[1] Ararat means "the plains of the Aryans" in Old Armenian. Brockhaus' *Lexicon*, vol. ii. p. 60.
[2] *Ibid.*, p 61.
[3] Art. "Ararat," in Riehm's *Bib. Handwörterbuch*.
[4] *Ibid.*

keen discussion. Until within the last generation its strict universality was hardly questioned. Thus we find even so lately as in the notes to Bagster's *Comprehensive Bible*, that "the evidence of its universality is most incontestable. The moose deer, a native of America, has been found buried in Ireland; elephants, natives of Asia and Africa, in the midst of England; crocodiles, natives of the Nile, in the heart of Germany; and shell-fish, never known in any but the American seas, with the entire skeletons of whales, in the most inland counties of England." It needs hardly be said that the least tincture of geological knowledge explodes the whole of this string of illustrations. The date of all these remains is inconceivably more remote than that of the Flood. The Irish elk is not the American moose; and the evidence is perfect that the great quadrupeds found in the more recent formations, or in the superficial drift in England, lived as well as died where they are found, and that the climate, as well as the flora and fauna, have been changed, again and again, over all the earth. The argument of the writer of this note would seek to demonstrate the universality of the Flood from all the fossil remains discovered; but these range through over twenty miles deep of rock, slowly deposited during successive geological ages, in the waters of ancient oceans or lakes. Surely it will not be maintained that a flood which left the leaf on an olive-tree could have formed beds of rock to the thickness of mile upon mile; or have seen the creation of successive types of animal and vegetable life from the corals of the lowest rocks, through every upward stage to the highest.

In 1823 Professor Buckland published his *Reliquiæ Diluvianæ*, to vindicate the Scripture narrative, by a

study of the present surface of the earth. The existence of huge beds of gravel in positions to which no rivers or torrents now in existence could have borne them, and the fact that masses of rock, carried far from their original site, are found strewn over and through them, were thought proofs of the passage of a flood like that of Noah over the regions where they occur. It has been shown, however, that this gravel, or drift, is of no one age, but of all ages; and that the boulders in it have evidently been transported to their present positions, not by a sudden rush of water, but by icebergs or glaciers; their surfaces being scratched exactly like those of the stones frozen into such masses of moving ice, and the rocks over which they pass. The retreat of the ice sheets that at various times covered nearly all Britain, and the melting of icebergs, with the consequent dropping of the boulders frozen into them—sometimes, even now, amounting to 20,000 tons in the case of a single iceberg—sufficiently and convincingly explained all the phenomena met with, and led Dr. Buckland himself to admit that his argument could not be maintained.

The theories that have at different times been proposed to explain the Mosaic Deluge, on the supposition of its being universal, form a curious chapter in the history of literature. Dr. Burnet,[1] in his *Theory of the Earth*, published in 1680–1689, supposes that, before the Deluge, the surface of the earth was perfectly flat, without mountains, valleys, or seas, and that its interior was filled with water. The outer crust, he conceives, became so heated by the sun, after a time, as to be split into fissures through which the waters within, expanded by the heat, burst out

[1] Thomas Burnet, born 1635, a Cambridge M. A. Born in Yorkshire, and latterly Master of the Charter House, and Clerk of the Closet to William III.; died in 1715.

with tremendous force, drowning all the race, and leaving the crust so unsupported that it fell together in dire confusion, creating on the one hand the vast hollows of the present oceans, and on the other, raising the hills and mountains of the world; the surplus waters flowing back into the hollow central abyss. By such a theory he hoped to account for the vast quantity of water required for a universal deluge; which he reckoned would be eight times as much as is contained in our present oceans and seas.

Ray,[1] a naturalist eminent in his day, adopted this theory, with the slight change of supposing the final catastrophe to have risen from a shifting of the earth's centre. Dr. Halley,[2] the astronomer, however, while also adopting it, supposed—astronomer-like—that the shock of a comet was the disturbing force. But all these theorists forgot that such agencies as they suggested would have caused an instantaneous deluge, not a gradual one like that of Genesis; nor did they explain how Noah could be saved in a convulsion which literally tore the earth in pieces. Whiston,[3] in his *New Theory of the Earth*, published in 1696, went, indeed, even so far, after calculating that the comet of 1680 had appeared on "the 28th Nov., B.C. 1349, as to publish a tract with the title, 'The Cause of the Deluge *Demonstrated*.'"

The Rev. William Kirby, the eminent entomologist, in his old age, astonished the world by propounding a theory still more extravagant. Not only did he believe in an abyss of waters within the earth; he held also that there was a

[1] John Ray or Wray. Studied at Cambridge, died in 1705. As a botanist and zoologist he ranks very high. His Deluge theory was published in 1692.

[2] Edmund Halley. Born 1656, died 1742.

[3] Wm. Whiston, M.A., Professor at Cambridge, Translator of Josephus. Born 1667, died 1752.

subterranean "metropolis of animals," where the huge saurians of the oolite and lias still survive.

Various other writers have, from time to time, advanced different theories respecting the Deluge, but thoughtful men of all shades of religious opinion have, latterly, come to the conclusion that the Noachian Deluge was only local. In support of this view many arguments have been offered, of which a few may be briefly stated.

The stupendous greatness of the miracle involved in a universal deluge, seems a strong reason to doubt the likelihood of God having resorted to a course wholly unnecessary to effect the end mainly in view—the judgment of mankind for their sins. There could certainly be no apparent reason for submerging the vast proportion of the world which was then uninhabited, or of raising the waters above the tops of mountains to which no living creature could approach. It is to be remembered, moreover, that the addition of such a vast mass of water to the weight of the earth—eight times that contained in the ocean beds — would have disarranged the whole solar system, and even the other systems of worlds through the universe; for all are interbalanced with each other in their various relations. Then, this immeasurable volume of water, after having served its brief use, must have been annihilated, to restore the harmony of the heavenly motions: the only instance in the whole economy of nature of the annihilation of even a particle of matter. Nor could any part of either the animal or vegetable worlds have survived a submersion of the planet for a year; and hence everything, except what the ark contained, must have perished, including even the fish; of which many species would die out if the water were fresh,

others, if it were brackish, and others, again, if it were salt.

Men of the soundest orthodoxy have further urged that physical evidences still exist which prove that the Deluge could only have been local. Thus Professor Henslow supports De Candolle's estimate of the age of some of the baobab trees of Senegal as not less than 5,230 years, and of the taxodium of Mexico as from 4,000 to 6,000 ; periods which carry still living trees beyond that of the Flood, according to the ordinary chronology. There is, moreover, in Auvergne, in France, a district covered with extinct volcanoes, marked by cones of pumice stone, ashes, and such light substances as could not have resisted the waters of the Deluge. Yet they are evidently more ancient than the time of Noah ; for since they became extinct, rivers have cut channels for themselves through beds of columnar basalt, that is, of intensely hard crystallized lava, of no less than 150 feet in thickness, and have even eaten into the granite rocks beneath. And Auvergne is not the only part where similar phenomena are seen. They are found in the Eifel country of the Prussian Rhine province ; in New Zealand, and elsewhere.

Nor is the peculiarity of some regions in their zoological characteristics less convincing. Thus, the fauna of Australia is entirely exceptional ; as, for example, in the strange fact that quadrupeds of all kinds are marsupial—that is, provided with a pouch in which to carry their young : an imperfect development of the mammalian characteristics—while links are found between higher and lower forms in creatures like the platypus, which has the same organization in some respects as a bird's, and lays eggs, has the bill and web feet of the duck, and yet is a quadruped

covered with thick fur; or such as the spiny ant-eater, another quadruped, which, also, like the platypus, lays eggs: creatures carrying us back to remote ages when the first classes of the animal kingdom were not yet distinctly defined, but still, as it were, were emerging one from the other. The fossil remains of this great island continent show, moreover, that existing species are the direct descendants of similar races, of extreme antiquity, and that the surface of Australia is the oldest land, of any considerable extent, yet discovered on the globe.

Nor is it possible to conceive of an assemblage of all the living creatures of the different regions of the earth at any one spot. The unique fauna of Australia—survivors of a former geological age—certainly could neither have reached the ark nor regained their home after leaving it; for they are separated from the nearest continuous land by vast breadths of ocean. The Polar bear surely could not survive a journey from his native icebergs to the sultry plains of Mesopotamia; nor could the animals of South America have reached these except by travelling the whole length, northwards, of North America, and then, after miraculously crossing Behring's Straits, having pressed, westwards, across the whole breadth of Asia, a continent larger than the moon. That even a deer should accomplish such a pedestrian feat is inconceivable, but how could a sloth have done it—a creature which lives in trees, never, if possible, descending to the ground, and able to advance on it only by the slowest and most painful motions? Or, how could tropical creatures find supplies of food in passing through such a variety of climates, and over vast spaces of hideous desert?

Still more—how could any vessel, however large, have

held pairs and sevens of all the creatures on earth, with food for a year, and how could the whole family of Noah have attended to them? Even if the ark, as has been supposed by one writer, was of 80,000 tons burden,[1] such a freightage needs only be mentioned to make it be felt impossible.

Look which way we like, gigantic difficulties meet us. Thus, it would have required a continuous miracle to keep alive the fish for whom the Deluge water was unsuitable, while even spawn would perish if kept unhatched for a whole year, as that of many fish must have been. Nor would the vegetable world have fared better than the animal, for, of all the known species of plants, very few would survive a year's submersion.

That a terrible catastrophe like that of the Flood—apart from the all-sufficient statements of Scripture—is not outside geological probability, is abundantly illustrated by recorded facts. The subsidence and upheaval of large extents of country have already been noticed. Nor can we justly measure the quiet of the present, though it is only comparative, with the violence of periods in the past. The vast chains of the Himalayah, the Caucasus, the Jura mountains and the Alps, for example, were all upheaved in the Pliocene period, which is one of the most recent in geology, though this vast upheaval implies no more than a slow and imperceptible elevation continuously, through successive ages.[2] A subsidence or elevation of a district, as the case might be, would cause a tremendous flood over vast regions.[3] Nor are such movements of the

[1] Note to Bagster's *Comprehensive Bible*, 4to.
[2] Heer, *The Primeval World of Switzerland*, vol. ii. p. 284.
[3] See pp. 130, 131.

earth's surface on a great scale unknown even now. Darwin repeatedly instances cases of recent elevation and depression of the earth's surface. On one part of the Island of St. Maria, in Chili, he found beds of putrid mussel shells still adhering to the rocks, ten feet above high-water mark, where the inhabitants had formerly dived at low-water spring tides for these shells.[1] Similar shells were met with by him at Valparaiso at the height of 1,300 feet.[2] And at another place a great bed of now-existing shells had been raised 350 feet above the level of the sea.[3]

"I have convincing proofs," says he, "that this part of the continent of South America—Northern Chili—has been elevated, near the coast, at least from 400 to 500, and in some parts from 1,000 to 1,300 feet since the epoch of existing shells; and further inland the rise possibly may have been greater."[4] Wallace shows that a vast portion of the South of Asia—from the east coast of Cochin China to the west coast of Sumatra, and thence round the outside of Borneo, itself nearly twice as large as Great Britain and Ireland together—has sunk beneath the ocean since the creation of the present forms of vegetation and animal life. This vast area embraces 27 degrees from north to south, and 21 from east to west; including a region of over 2,000,000 square miles. In all parts of this the sea is still so shallow—never exceeding 50 fathoms in depth—that ships can anchor in any part of it.[5] Elevations also are as marked as this amazing subsidence. "In many places," says he, "I have observed the unaltered surfaces of the elevated reefs, with great masses of coral

[1] Darwin's *Naturalist's Voyage*, p. 310. [2] *Ibid.*, pp. 310, 254.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 297.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 358.
[5] Wallace's *The Malay Archipelago*, vol. i. p. 14.

standing up in their natural position, and hundreds of shells so fresh-looking that it was hard to believe that they had been more than a few years out of the water; and, in fact, it is very probable that such changes have occurred within a few centuries."[1] No difficulty on geological grounds can therefore be urged against such a catastrophe having happened, in the early ages of our race, as would have swept the whole seat of human habitation with a deluge in whose waters all mankind must have perished.

The great cause, without question, of the belief that the Flood was universal, has been the idea that the words of Scripture taught this respecting that awful visitation. But they by no means do so. The word translated "earth" in our English version has not only the meaning of "the world" as a whole, but others much more limited. Thus it often stands for Palestine alone,[2] and even for the small district round a town,[3] or for a field or plot of land.[4] Besides, we must not forget that such words are always to be understood according to the meaning attached to them by the age or people among whom they are used. But what ideas the ancient Hebrews had of the world has been already shown, and the limited sense in which they used the most general phrases—just as we ourselves often do when we wish to create a vivid impression of wide extent or great number—is seen from the usage of their descendants, in the New Testament. When St. Luke speaks of Jews dwelling at Jerusalem out of "every nation under heaven,"[5] it would surely be

[1] Wallace's *The Malay Archipelago*, vol. i. p. 10.
[2] Joel i. 2. Ps. xxxvii. 9, 11, 22, 29; xliv. 3. Prov. ii. 21; x. 30.
[3] Josh. viii. 1.
[4] Gen. xxiii. 15. Exod. xxiii. 10.
[5] Acts ii. 5.

wrong to press this to a literal exactness. When St. Paul says that the faith of the obscure converts at Rome was spoken of "throughout the whole world,"[1] he could not have meant the whole round orb, but only the Roman empire. And would any one think of taking in the modern geographical sense his declaration that already, when he was writing to the Colossians, the gospel had been preached to every creature under heaven?[2]

What region the Flood actually covered must always remain more or less matter of conjecture, but "there is a remarkable portion of the globe," says Hugh Miller, "chiefly on the Asiatic continent, though it extends into Europe, and which is nearly equal to all Europe in area—whose rivers, the Volga, the Oural, and others, do not fall into the ocean or into any of the many seas which communicate with it. They are, on the contrary, turned inwards, if I may so express myself; losing themselves in the eastern parts of the tract, in the lakes of a rainless district, in which they only supply the waste of evaporation; and falling, in the western parts, into seas such as the Caspian and the Aral. In this region there are extensive districts still under the level of the ocean. The shore line of the Caspian, for example, is rather more than 83 feet beneath that of the Black Sea; and some of the great flat steppes which spread out around it have a mean level of about 30 feet below that of the Baltic. Were a trench-like strip of country communicating between the Caspian and the Gulf of Finland to be depressed beneath the level of the latter sea, it would so open the fountains of the great deep as to lay under water an extensive and populous region, containing the cities of Astrachan and Astrabad, and many other

[1] Rom. i. 8. [2] Col. i. 23.

towns and villages. Nor is it unworthy of remark that part of this peculiar region forms no inconsiderable portion of the great recognized centre of the human family."[1] Read in connection with what is said elsewhere[2] of the movements of the earth's surface over the Baltic region even at this day, this passage is very striking.

[1] *Testimony of the Rocks*, p. 345. [2] See pp. 130, 131.

CHAPTER XII.

THE FIRST GLIMPSES OF NATIONAL HISTORY.

TRUE to the simplicity of the early ages of mankind, the relations of men to the Almighty are presented in Scripture in language suited to such a state of society. Abstract ideas are formed only at a late period in the development of a race: like children, they must long be addressed through the senses rather than by the intellect alone. Hence, instead of speaking of God in lofty and mysterious terms; then quite unintelligible, and hardly less so now; Scripture habitually ascribes to Him the actions, emotions, and language which men themselves would have used in similar circumstances. Adam and Eve,[1] we are told, heard the voice of God as He was walking in the garden in the cool of the day[2]—that is, when the fresh breeze of evening has succeeded the sultry heat of noon. He is described as speaking the creative words; as pronouncing the curse in human language; as holding judgment on Cain in direct arraignment and condemnation; as repenting that He had made man on the earth, and as grieved at His heart; as directing Noah in the details of the plan of the ark, and as making a covenant with Him, in human speech, after the Deluge.

[1] The name of Eve was perpetuated among the Assyrians, in that of their goddess Ava = "life." The Hebrew word is Havah. The name Adam was in the same way perpetuated in Assyrian in the form Admu, dadmu, or dadmi = dust. See p. 70.

[2] This is the full translation.

It is not, however, to be thought from such modes of expression, that human characteristics are intended to be ascribed to the Creator. In any age it is necessary to describe the unknown by the help of the known, and as the mysterious Personality of God must ever be incomprehensible to man, there is no way in which we can represent His relations to us, except by using words borrowed from our own faculties, emotions, and modes of action. Language, in any case, is at first a series of images appealing to the senses, and it only slowly passes into an abstract term in which the idea is directly embodied. The simple word "man," meant, at first, "the thinking being:"[1] "woman" was originally "wife-man," and our word "God," though so like "good," seems to have come, rather, from the Sanscrit word, "gudha," "the self-concealing invisible One."[2] The word "angel" means simply "a messenger;" and though spirits "have neither flesh nor bones as we have," it is impossible to speak of them except under the imaginative form of a perfect human shape, and human attributes. So also with God. Knowing no being higher than ourselves, we must speak of Him by images drawn from our own nature, or leave Him a cold and inconceivable abstraction, like the Hindoo Brahma.

The exquisite naturalness with which this inevitable accommodation to our necessities is carried out in it, marks the extreme antiquity of the Bible. The world was still young when the Old Testament was written, especially its earliest parts; and the sacred writers only speak as we should expect them, when they use a childlike simplicity. But the whole Bible, alike, impresses on us the remembrance that human attributes ascribed to God are only fig-

[1] See p. 70.

[2] Müller's *Etymol. Sprach-Wörterbuch.*

ures of speech ; for even Moses expressly forbids any representations of Him. Heathen nations might personify their divinities in images and paintings : no more was permitted to Israel than to use the imagery of words which our mental constitution absolutely demands.

Little is told us of Noah's life after his wonderful preservation. Descending with his family from the ark,[1] he built the first altar of which there is any mention, and offered on it, as was fitting, a burnt-offering "of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl." It may be in remembrance of this earliest consecration of the mountain tops to grateful worship, that "high places" have been so universal among all races, in all ages, and that cairns and cromlechs were built on heights from the remotest times. Paradise had vanished with the Flood, and God Himself, as it were, removed from earth to heaven ; though still present to save those who duly honoured Him. What spot could be more appropriate for recommencing the homage of the race to Him, than one raised above the common earth ; one marked, moreover, by so signal an event as the deliverance of the remnant of mankind ?

When the division of animals into clean and unclean was made we are not informed, but it is worthy of notice that Noah does not confine himself in his offering to those regarded as clean under the law of Moses.[2] The greatness of the occasion, however, demanded a sacrifice in keeping with it, and Noah, moreover, had provided for this in the number of clean creatures admitted into the ark. Nor is

[1] The "gopher wood" (Gen. vi 14), of which the ark was built, is mentioned only in this one place. It seems to have been the "Copher," or cypress tree, which grows more abundantly in Chaldæa and Armenia than in any other country. Gesenius defines it, "a pitch and resin producing tree, as the pine, cedar, fir or cypress." *Thesaurus*, 300. The Septuagint wrongly translates it "squared beams."

[2] Lev. i. 2, 10, 14.

there any mention of offering parts of the victims only, as was appointed by Moses :[1] the whole seems to have been laid on the altar, as a form of sacrifice peculiar to the patriarchal age.

A brief phrase, which henceforth became the standing form for the Divine satisfaction with a sacrifice, expresses the reconciliation which followed between earth and heaven. God "smelled a sweet savour,"[2] and graciously gave a promise that man should never again be destroyed by a Deluge. Henceforth, seed time and harvest, cold and heat, and summer and winter, should never cease. The Hebrews marked their year by the rainy winter time, with its cold, and its preparation of the soil and sowing—and the dry summer, with its heat, and its harvest.[3] As yet, like the Hindoos still, the hoary fathers of the world had six seasons.

God had given His blessing to man when first created, and now repeated it when our race was beginning anew. Nature, in all its tribes, was formally subjected to mankind. Our first parents had received a gift of all that grows as their food, but henceforth every "moving thing that lives"—not, therefore, the Levitically clean alone—was to be our "meat." But with this there were limitations. The warm blood of men and humbler creatures seemed, in the early ages of the world, to contain the very life, and to be almost identical with the soul, and hence it was especially sacred, in proportion as the life and spirit were held in reverence. The sight of what was believed to be the soul itself, carried the mind instantly to thoughts of

[1] Lev. i. [2] Lev. i. 9

[3] Exod. xxxiv. 21. Ps. lxxiv. 17. Prov. xx. 4. Isa. xviii. 4–6. Jer. viii. 20; xxxvi. 22. Amos iii. 15. Zech. xiv. 8.

God, called up in it mysterious fears, and filled it with the unspeakable awe which overpowers us when the veil between us and the Divine is for the moment rent. Hence, blood could scarcely be touched, far less eaten, by piously-minded men in the early ages, and in this spirit God forbade its use, with the utmost strictness, to Noah, and afterwards to Israel. As the seat of life and indivisible from it—of that life which belongs to God, it was to be shunned. Even that of creatures slain for food must be covered with earth and hidden out of sight. Life must be honoured as divine and sacred: a rule of unspeakable worth in the violence of rude ages. A further sanctity was thrown over the precept in after times, by Moses, in the command that the blood of all sacrifices should be poured out on the altar, as an "atonement for the soul"[1] of the offerer. On this prohibition and the others that follow, the Rabbis founded the requirements demanded from heathen half-proselytes; to shun idolatry, blasphemy, murder, the eating of blood and things strangled, fornication and incest, robbery and theft, and disobedience to authority.[2] Nor is it without interest to note that this rabbinical law was so generally accepted in the days of our Lord that it was adopted by the Apostolic Church as the rule for Gentile converts to Christianity.[3]

A second prohibition throws further light on patriarchal morals and social polity. While the animals could be killed at man's will, human blood was not to be shed, either by man or beast, without a penalty. God had already proclaimed the sanctity of human life by the sign given to Cain, to preserve him,[4] and by the pro-

[1] Lev. xvii. 11.
[2] Dillmann, in *Bibel Lex.*, vol. iv. p. 341.
[3] Acts xv. 20–29.
[4] Gen. iv. 15.

hibition of the use of blood as food; but this additional law now made it specially sacred and inviolable. For the life that is taken, He declares He will demand that of the beast or of the man who has taken it. Life is to be paid for life. Society is possible only when the person is safe, and hence, in this fundamental law, the corner-stone of human progress and social life was firmly laid at the very hour of the new birth of the world.

This first covenant between God and man was confirmed by a sign worthy of a transaction so unique. The rainbow had glittered on the clouds for immeasurable ages before man's creation, but it was now to be adopted as a Divine pledge of good-will to our race. Other covenants would be made with Abraham and with Moses, but they were sealed only by a personal or passing pledge; this had a perennial sign in heaven vouchsafed it. The simplicity of the language used is only equalled by its beauty. "When I bring a cloud over the earth," and cause it to rain, "the bow shall be on the cloud, and I will look on it; that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature," and stay the rain, "that it become no more a flood like that which has just ended." The sacredness of the rainbow has passed, from this consecration, into the religions and poetry of all nations. Homer tells us that Jupiter set it in the clouds for a sign.[1] In the so-called Field of the Magi, in Persia, there may still be seen a picture cut into a rock, showing a winged boy sitting on a rainbow, and an old man before it in the attitude of prayer.[2] The Greeks fabled Iris, who brought messages from God to man, as the rainbow. The old Scandinavians,

[1] *Iliad*, xi. 47; xvii. 547.

[2] Rosenmüller, *Das Alte und Neue Morgenland*, vol. i. p. 43.

and perhaps the Germans, fancied it a bridge built by God to link heaven and earth. But in Genesis the symbol is grandly monotheistic and spiritual. The rainbow is the pledge of friendship between God and man, the token of Divine grace and pity, the assurance of preserving care. Appearing only when the sun has finally broken through the clouds, it is, moreover, a special sign that the watery destruction which the clouds held in their bosom is already turned aside.

The only additional mention we have of Noah is apparently given to introduce the historical notice of his descendants. Having betaken himself after the Flood to the growth of the vine,[1] it became, we are told, the occasion of revealing in his son Ham a trait in which the patriarch read the unworthy future of the offender's posterity. In the want of modest shame, and the hint of impurity and sensualism in family life, thus disclosed, Noah's prophetic glance saw the characteristics of Ham's son, Canaan, and his descendants, and foretold the debasement that would surely follow: "He would be cursed, and would be a servant of servants to his brethren." But this implied the continued guilt of his race, for the curse of God falls only on those that hate Him.[2] The reverent modesty of Shem and Japheth, in the same way, foreshadowed the better future before their children. (The moral and intellectual peculiarities of a race are, perhaps, only the perpetuation of those of their first ancestors: the moral features stamped as abidingly as the physical or intellectual.) Permanence of type is recognized in the lower creatures, and it is natural that it should be a law among

[1] This was probably in Armenia, the native country of the plant. Tristram's *Nat. Hist.*, p. 403.

[2] Exod. xx. 5.

mankind. To Shem and Japheth, therefore, their father's visions of the future revealed a far different picture from that prepared for the descendants of Ham. From Shem were to spring Israel and the races most closely connected with the earthly kingdom of God; from Ham, among others, the Canaanitish nations, contrasted most strongly to the Chosen People in history, religion, and morals: but the descendants of Japheth, rough, indeed, like the northern regions they were to choose, yet uncorrupted and vigorous, were to press even into the bounds of the Semitic stock. History verifies the complete fulfilment of the patriarchal prediction. The glory of Shem, as the fountain-head of the religion of mankind, needs no illustration; and the race of Canaan sank before the descendants of Japheth, in even their earliest settlements in the islands of the Levant, and on the coasts of Asia and of other lands.[1]

A point so interesting demands attention to the precise words employed. The future of the race of Shem is illustrated, in the patriarch's mind, by their happiness in knowing the true God. He is the God of Shem, and, as such, will, Himself, be their exceeding great reward. As to Japheth, as he and Shem had acted together, like true sons, their history would also in a measure blend. "God give wide bounds to Japheth,"[2] says the seer. "He shall dwell in the tents of Shem"—that is, he shall have part in Shem's blessing; for the God of Shem will also be *his* God. How the nations sprung from Japheth stretched from

[1] Knobel's *Die Genesis* (1875), p. 172.

[2] Nöldeke, in *Bibel Lex.*, art. "Japheth," explains this—"God gives him prosperity, that is, wide bounds, in contrast to contracted, which imply the opposite of prosperity." The pronoun "He," in what follows, Nöldeke understands of God. 'Yet the greatest blessing will remain with Shem, for God will dwell in his tents."

Judæa to the Atlantic; how they now reach across it to the New World, and have founded empires in the wide Southern Ocean; how, moreover, the religion of Shem has been their heritage also, is part of history.

The earliest known movements of our race, as disclosed by the study of the primeval records preserved at Babylon and Nineveh; by the brief notices of ancient writers; and by modern philological investigations, show that in prehistoric times tribes related to the Mongol race and known by the general name of Turanian, had spread themselves over a great part of the world. This great division of mankind includes in our day the Finns and Lapps of Northern Europe, the Basques of Spain, the Turks and Turcomans of Central Asia, the Hungarians, the tribes of Northern Siberia, the Indians of the American continents, and the teeming myriads of China and Japan. Once stretching from the Amoor to the farthest west, they have now rather changed than diminished their wide range. The very different types of mankind seen in this great race as we know it to-day, seem to have sprung from a mixture of the white and the yellow families of men; for some nations have all the characteristics of the whites, others are identical with the yellow, and between these there are varieties which connect the most perfect European type with that of the Chinese.

A tradition still current among the wandering Turcomans of Asia, places its cradle a little north of the tableland of Pamir, in one of the valleys of the Altai Mountains. Starting thence, one part of it sought the west, and spread to the extremities of Europe; where the Basques of Spain and some of the Pyrenean populations are, perhaps, its last representatives. Another portion,

wandering south, occupied the plains of Bactria, crossed the Hindoo Koosh, and made its home, at first, on the border of the table-land of Iran or Persia, where it established itself in the region afterwards known as Media. Several tribes, however, wandered on to Atropatene, to Armenia, and even, as we have seen, to Asia Minor. Others again pushed to the south and fixed their homes in the uplands and plains of Susiana, and on the banks of the Tigris and the Euphrates.

These earliest known inhabitants of Mesopotamia were called among themselves "the Accadians" or "Mountaineers;" a name brought with them from the mountain land in the far north-east from which their race had migrated. Before reaching the Euphrates they had already become an organized nation, possessing a peculiar form of writing, the knowledge of building and of various arts, including agriculture; in fact, all the chief necessary industries of civilization, including a systematized legislation and minutely elaborated religion. Their alphabet, like that of the Egyptians, was at first purely hieroglyphic; each sign being a picture of the object desired to be represented, or of something nearest the idea to be expressed. Thus "God" was indicated by a star with eight rays; a king by the figure of a bee; but these signs, erelong, passed into rude imitations of their original form, and thus led to the system known as the cuneiform, or arrowhead, or wedge-shaped characters.

Besides writing, however, these Accadians knew the use of both the common and precious metals, for they had learned the art of mining in the rich mountain regions of Tibet, their first home. Their oldest tombs contain objects in gold, and in bronze and iron; knives, hatchets,

scythes, bracelets, and chased ear-rings. But, side by side with these, are found flint arms and implements, heads of arrows, axes, and hammers. Iron was the scarcest metal amongst them, and, as such, the most precious. The fragments we possess of their laws treat of the relations and rights of the family, which closely resemble those prevalent among the ancient Finns and Lapps, in the special importance ascribed to the wife, who could hold property even after marriage. To deny his mother excluded a son from earth and water; to deny a father only entailed a fine. Nothing can be more strangely new, though little could be more convincing, than the proofs by which modern scholars identify this long-vanished branch of a great race with the still surviving section of Turanians known as the Ougro-Finnish. But, unlikely though it seems, there is every reason to believe that a close relationship of blood existed between the Magyar and the modern Finlander on the one hand, and the earliest settlers of Chaldæa on the other.

This Turanian race had been established, we know not how long, on the Euphrates and Tigris, when a people of another stock appeared, disputing their territory and ultimately overpowering them. These were a branch of the Cushite or Ethiopian stock, a people very distinct from the negro. Short in stature, thin and well made; their abundant hair, often curly, was never crisped like that of the negro; dark-coloured, but varying from clear brown to black, their features were regular, often delicate; the brow straight, narrow, and often high; the nose long, thin, and fine, but the lips thick and fleshy. An Assyrian tablet in a list of nations along the Taurus Mountains, mentions a country bearing the name of Kusu, which is that used in

the inscriptions for Ethiopia, so that some of this race had early settled in what is now Cappadocia, or in its immediate neighbourhood. The hardiest, crossing Persia and Arabia, reached the Straits of Bab el Mandeb, and passing over into Africa, settled on the Blue Nile, where their posterity were for many ages the mortal enemies of the Egyptians, and more than once their masters. From the mouths of the Indus they spread, southwards, along the western shores of India, to the Malabar Coast, and westwards, along the coast of what is now Beloochistan, and the edges of the Persian Gulf. In Arabia they fringed the land on the east and south, and passing into Africa reached the regions of Sofala—that is, as far south as the colony of Natal; penetrating also, by the straits of Bab el Mandeb, along the western side of the Red Sea, to the Elanitic Gulf, which bounds the peninsula of Sinai on the east. Their energy, indeed, broke beyond these bounds, for we can follow them along the edge of the Mediterranean, from the Delta of Egypt to Palestine,[1] on the shores of which they found their most famous home, as the Phœnicians of Sidon and Tyre; the "Canaanites" of the Bible. Thus, from the Indus to the Mediterranean, and from the coasts of Palestine to the far south of Africa, the race of Cush everywhere showed itself; nor can it be wrong to regard it as perhaps the most important of all the great primitive races of mankind. Its fame, indeed, spread through all antiquity, for the Greek poets commemorate the Cushite Memnon, the founder of Susa and the ally of Priam, while Homer celebrates the Ethiopians as the wisest and remotest of men, of whom part dwelt at the rising and part at the setting sun.[2]

[1] D'Eckstein, in *L'Athenæum Français*, April 22, 1854. [2] *Odyss.*, i. 23, 24.

The Cushites spoke a language very closely allied to the Hebrew, Arabic, and other Semitic idioms; as if they and the Semitic races had originally lived together and been of the same stock, which, indeed, we know from Genesis they originally were, though civilized at different periods. They were, in fact, a branch of the great Semitic family which had earliest left the common centre, and having, first among the tribes known by that name, abandoned the nomadic life and risen to civilization, drew down on themselves for doing so, at once the envy and hatred of the other branches of the race which kept to their pastoral life.[1]

Three of the chief Cushite[2] peoples chose the neighbourhood of the Persian Gulf; one, the Kossians or Kissiens of the classics, settling in the mountainous region on the east of the Tigris, afterwards known as Susiana; a second fixing their dwelling in the lower regions of the Euphrates and Tigris; a third colonizing the southern shores and the off-lying islands of the Persian Gulf, whence in later times they emigrated to the Mediterranean, to become the Phœnicians of the Palestine coasts.[3]

From a division of this great race rose the first great wars of conquest of which we have mention. At a very early period, a Cushite chieftain, perhaps from the wild heights of the Taurus Mountains, Nimrod by name, the Alexander of his day, apparently with the help of the Semitic population of the mouths of the Tigris and Euphra-

[1] Creutzer and Guigniant, *Religions de l'Antiquité*, vol. ii. pt. 3, pp. 8, 22.

[2] The name is often spelt Koushite, but the Bible spelling is retained as better known.

[3] Oppert fixes on the island of Bahrein in the Persian Gulf as the original seat of the Phœnicians. There was a place called Tyrus there. *Proceedings of Society of Bib. Archæol.* (Nov. 4, 1879). Maspero is of the same opinion. *Histoire Ancienne*, p. 145.

tes, after a fierce struggle conquered the Turanian Accadians already long settled in Mesopotamia. Jewish legend has traced his name to a verb meaning "to rebel," but this etymology is more than doubtful. It seems, indeed, more likely that it means "the glorious" or "splendid," and that it was given to the founder of the Cushite dynasty as that of the god Merodach—the planet Jupiter, an old Accadian deity, with whom he was thus, in flattery, identified.[1] He may, also, be the same as Gis-dubar, the hero of the great Chaldæan epic of Creation, having been glorified in later Semitic legend as the Solar Hero after having been originally exalted by the Accadians as their god of "Fire." It may be that we have a reminiscence of his name in the ancient town of Nipour or Nipra, in Babylonia; a place identified in the Talmud with the Biblical town of Calneh.[2] Like many conquerors, Nimrod bore the fame of a mighty hunter; no mean advantage in an age when forest and waste were still so largely unsubdued. That his name filled the ear of the world in his own distant day is sufficiently proved by the fact that, with those of Solomon and Alexander the Great, it has still a mysterious grandeur among all the peoples of Western Asia.

"The beginning of his kingdom," we read, was Babel—and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar;[3] places, the population of which is indicated as Accadian from the mention of Accad as one of them. Of these early cities, Babel—the gate, or temple of the god El, afterwards known as the mighty Babylon—needs no iden-

[1] *Joma*, x. *a*. Schrader repudiates this identification. Lenormant quotes it without remark. Marduk = Merodach.

[2] Grivel, in *Trans. Soc. Bib. Arch.*, vol. iii. pp. 136 ff.

[3] Gen. x. 10.

tification. In Erech, or Moon-town,[1] we have, doubtless, the Arka of the monuments, and the Warka of to-day; a place, apparently, even in the earliest ages, the great Necropolis of the Babylonians,[2] as it still is of the natives of that region, die where they may.[3] It lies south of Babylon, on the west side of the Euphrates. Sumir, or Shinar, was the southern half of Mesopotamia, while Accadia was the northern half, deriving its name from the city of Accad, which was a suburb of Sippara, or Sepharvaim. The Accadian form of the name was Agadâ, the capital of Sargon I., and the seat of the famous library, dating from B.C. 3,800, and containing, among other treasures, a work on astronomy and astrology in seventy-two "books."

This prehistoric conquest still finds a silent corroboration in the earliest monuments that have been preserved. On these, the two distinct elements of the population of Chaldæa and Babylon created by it, are recorded—the Sumirs, or "dwellers on the river," and the Accads, or "mountaineers,"—the former, specially inhabitants of the "land of Sumir" or Shinar;[4] the latter of the "land of the Accadians;" terms constantly used together on the monuments for Babylon as a political whole. The fusion of these two races, the Sumirs, a Cushite branch of the Semitic stock, and the Accads, produced, in the course of time, the Chaldæan nation known in history.

This mingled population of two different stocks, which history at its dawn introduces to us as occupying the soil

[1] Oppert. Schrader disputes this etymology. The Moon, he says, was not the special god of Erech, but rather, a goddess, apparently the same as Beltis.

[2] Schrader's *Keilinschriften*, p. 18.

[3] Loftus (*Chaldæa*) gives a terrible account of the transport of caravans of corpses from vast distances, at the present day, for burial at Warka.

[4] Shinar is only a varying form of Sumir, in Accadian.

of Babylonia, found neither quarries, nor mines, from which to extract stone for their building, or metals for their use. Perhaps, like the Chaldæan Arabs of to-day, their first habitations were no more than huts of wattled osiers covered with mats. But, if so, they soon employed more solid material in the wood of the palm, and burnt or sun-dried bricks, for the oldest ruins as yet known are those of gigantic buildings of these materials. Thus, at Borsippa,[1] more than twelve miles, in a straight line, from the huge mound known as Babil, which marks what was once the centre of ancient Babylon, we find the most interesting memorial of the great city, in the vast heap which has immemorially borne the name of Birs Nimrud, or the Tower of Nimrod, and covers the remains of a great temple once dedicated to the god Nebo. This great ruin, a bare hill of yellow sand and bricks, near the left bank of the Euphrates, reaches a height of 198 feet: a vast mass of brickwork jutting from the mound, to a further height of 37 feet, making 235 in all. It is ascended by a ravine on the south-east side, which rises gently, over what appears a hill of shapeless earth, but proves at once on examination to be the remains of brick-work; the plain of Babylon, as we may remind the reader, furnishing no other material for the grandest constructions than its clay, baked in the sun or burnt. The huge mass of bricks, rising from the mound, is thickly fretted with lichens—a proof, under such a sky, of the vast age of the ruin. Numerous birds find shelter in its cracks and rifts; and, all round, the ground is strewn with fragments and masses of bricks, fallen from above. Of these some are yellow, others blue or dark green;

[1] Borsippa is the old name—*Barsip*, of a "quarter" of Babylon.—*Riehm*. Oppert, at this place, found bricks marked "Barsip."

many of the larger blocks showing proofs of having been exposed to intense heat,[1] as if their surface had been artificially vitrified. So fierce, indeed, has been the fire, that the layers of bricks still visible are twisted and waved from their original horizontal position.

The original form of the whole structure, which was known to the Greeks as the Temple of Belus, was that of seven square towers, rising in diminishing size, one over the other, like gigantic steps; each consecrated to one of the seven planetary gods, of which it was the special sanctuary. The lowest step was sacred to Saturn: the next to Venus, after whom Jupiter, Mercury, Mars, and the Moon rose in lofty splendour; that of the Sun coming last, and highest, of all. The magnificence of the whole was greatly heightened by each stage being coloured with the tint regarded as appropriate to the divinity to whom it was devoted—black, white, orange, blue, scarlet, silver, and gold—distinguishing the respective stories. The construction in platforms of diminishing size was not uncommon, for a tower of the same character, at Khorsabad, still shows the remains of four. Herodotus describes this one as standing in an enclosure 1,200 feet square, and as, itself, 606 feet square at the base; Strabo adding its height as also a stadium; which would make it half as high again as the cross on St. Paul's.

Doubt has, however, been thrown on these ancient accounts, by the apparent contradiction between this mountain-like height and the more humble proportions of a great tower, repaired by Nebuchadnezzar, which seems to

[1] The words in Genesis for "let us make bricks," are almost identical with those meaning the same in Assyrian inscriptions. It is striking to notice that bitumen has been used for mortar at Birs Nimrud, in strict accordance with Genesis xi. 3.

have been the temple of Belus. Two copies of an inscription record his having repaired and completed it, after it had remained unfinished, from immemorial antiquity; a fact strikingly corroborative of the narrative of Genesis. He tells us that "An earlier king had built the Temple of the Seven Lights of the Earth, the Tower of Borsippa, to the height of eighty-four feet,—but had not completed it, and many days had passed since then. There was no proper management of the outflow-canals for the water of the place. Rain and storm had washed out the burned bricks, and the sun-dried bricks of its roofing were cracked. The burned bricks of the Temple itself had, also, been washed away into heaps of ruin. The great god Merodach put it into my mind to repair it; but I did not meddle with the site, and I left the foundation walls untouched. In a prosperous month, and on a lucky day, I repaired the burned bricks of the body of the building, and the sun-dried bricks of the roofing, joining them fast by mason-work; and I renewed the wood-work, and set my name on the top of its rebuilt walls. I raised my hand to finish it and to set up its top. I rebuilt it as it had been of old, and raised its top as it had been in those days."[1] Schrader understands that Nebuchadnezzar added 84 feet to the already existing tower, thus making it 168 feet high in all, but this hardly seems to be implied in the inscription. Ebers, on the other hand, thinks that the present Birs Nimrud, if it be the Tower of Babel, is only the ruins of the first story.[2] The multitudes of similar structures in Babylonia, and the dis-

[1] M. Oppert has collected all the notices of Birs Nimrud, and of the Tomb of Belus, from the classics, and also all the references to them in the cuneiform inscriptions, and seems to not a few to have proved beyond question that Birs Nimrud is indeed the Tower of Babel. See *La Bible et les Découvertes Modernes*, par L'Abbe Vigouroux, vol. i. p. 297.

[2] *Eine Ægyptische Königstochter*, vol. ii. p. 250, *note*.

tance of this one from Babylon itself, seem to this great scholar to make the identification doubtful. However this may be, it is curious to find how estimates vary; for while one gives that of the mound at 198 feet, with an addition of 38 for the brick-work at the top, another speaks of it as only 153½ feet high, in all; which Schrader compares with the 168 feet he thinks he has obtained. The discrepancy of these figures, with those of Herodotus and Strabo, is extraordinary, nor is it easy to see how it can be explained, unless Alexander's soldiers had lowered the vast mound by nearly two-thirds, or Ebers be right in his conjecture, that all that remains is only the wreck of the lowest story.

Whether these gigantic erections belong to the period to which the eleventh chapter of Genesis refers, is of course a question, but they are at least as old as the earliest records of profane history.[1] It seems certain, moreover, even apart from the Bible, that a great empire, founded by one known ever since as Nimrod, absorbed the whole of West Asia, shattering the Turanian power, which till then had spread itself far and wide, and leaving its warlike memorials in the shape of towers, castles, and fortified cities. Assyria, in the mountainous north, may have been only an extension of this wide dominion; but, in any case, Nimrod was the Cæsar or Napoleon of the first races of men. It does not follow from this, however, that the conception of him in tradition as an arch-rebel against God is correct, nor that he was, as Josephus supposed, the prime mover in the building of the Tower of Babel.[2] The phrase used of him in Scripture seems one of commendation rather than blame; for, to speak of him as "a mighty one," that is, a

[1] Schrader, *Keilinschriften*, p. 35, thinks that Birs Nimmel is certainly "The Tower of Babel."

[2] *Ant.*, i. 4, 2.

warrior hero, "on the earth," and as "a mighty hunter before Jehovah," shows that the bad name he has since held was not attached to him in the days of Moses; for "before Jehovah" is a phrase equivalent to "well pleasing" to Him, as is seen in many texts.[1]

The building and arrest of "The Tower of Babel," and the "confusion of tongues," are evidently connected with this glimpse of the first great military empire. Whether, as some have suggested, the phrase "the whole earth," in the first verse of the eleventh chapter of Genesis, should be translated "the whole land," is a point on which the most orthodox may safely differ, as we have already seen in connection with the Flood. The narrative carries us back to a period, we know not how remote, when the various races of Mesopotamia were united under one rule. In the child-like language natural to a document which has reached us from the infancy of the world, we read that some of these peoples, accustomed to build gigantic towers, in imitation of the distant mountains from which their forefathers had come, determined to found a city which should boast of a tower, reaching, in their simple conceptions, to heaven; in the hope at once of attracting the favour of the gods, and

[1] Gen. xvii. 1; xxiv. 40; xlviii. 15. Ps. xix. 14; cxvi. 9. See Gesenius' *Lexicon*, under the word Jehovah. Grivet quotes an Accadian liturgy, in which Merodach is called, "I am he who *walks before* EA—I am the warrior, the eldest son of EA—the messenger." Ea undoubtedly resembles Jah in sound, and the whole phrase is strikingly like the expressions respecting Nimrod in Genesis. The words translated in our version, "a mighty hunter," are rendered in the Septuagint, "a giant hunter;" in the Vulgate, "a valiant hunter;" in the Arabic, "a terrible giant;" in the Syriac, "a giant warrior;" and in the Chaldee, "a valiant man." "To walk before Jehovah" is the ideal of a godly life in Scripture. Can it be, asks M. Grivet, that the word "walk" has been lost from the Hebrew text in its reference to Nimrod? There is at least very little doubt that the great king was deified after his death, if not before it; for, apart from the meaning of Merodach, the constellation Orion bears in Arabic the name El Jabbar, "the giant." Orion is a mighty hunter even in Homer, *Odyss.*, xi. 572, 575. The words describing Nimrod in Scripture are, strange to say, the same as those used of Gisdubar, the hero of the old Babylonian legends.

of forming one grand religious centre.[1] A great catastrophe, however, brought about we know not how, not only stopped the undertaking, but led to the population being scattered "abroad" from the plain of Shinar, "upon the face of all the earth;" "confounding their language," so that they could not understand one another's speech. Can it be that in this narration we have the statement of the immediate cause of that dispersion of mankind from their original common home, which led to the divergence of human speech into the three great branches—the Turanian, the Semitic, and the Aryan, to which it can even now be finally traced back? "Nothing," says Max Müller, "necessitates the admission of different beginnings for the formal elements of the Turanian, Semitic, and Aryan branches of speech."[2] While these three great families of language are characterized by wide distinctions in form and structure, there is at the same time such an amount of similarity in the leading roots of all as would indicate something like a common origin. "It is possible even now," says Professor Müller, "to point out radicals which, under various changes and disguises, have been current in the three branches ever since their first separation."

"What could be more fitting," asks Bunsen, "than to recognize in this narrative, the account of the division

[1] So the Israelites spoke of cities "Walled up to heaven," Deut. i. 28; and so Homer speaks of a pine-tree reaching to heaven. *Odyss.*, v. 239. The uneducated have very limited ideas about the size of the universe. One peasant, I asked, thought the stars might be five miles off: a labourer told me they might be nine or ten miles off.

[2] *Lectures on the Science of Language*, 1st series, p 342. F. Delitzsch—*Studien über indogermanische Wurzelverwandtschaft* has collected a surprising number of roots common to Sanscrit and Hebrew. A single example may suffice. The word *gahal* means *to call*, in Hebrew, Assyrian, and Aramaic. In the same way *kaleo*, in Greek, means *to call*, and *concilium*, in Latin, means a body of people *called* together (p. 90).

of Central Asiatic mankind into those three great world-historical races, which form in themselves a unity, and to which we are now in a position to trace back all the peoples of Asia and Europe known to us by their speech? Research respecting these three races, the Turanians, the Semites, and the Aryans, leads us to a great common centre—the district bounded by the mountains of Central Asia—the Caucasus, Ararat, and the Altai."[1]

Bunsen sees in the narration a hint of the providential breaking up of Nimrod's empire, and the subsequent dispersion of the population; resulting in such a formation of dialects and languages no longer understood except by the tribes in which they had sprung up, as happened at the dissolution of the Roman empire.[2] This is ingenious, and does not exclude the direct action of God in the result; for His course is no less providential, whether sudden, or working by the slow operation of natural laws. The growth of a tree in a hundred years is as truly Divine as if it grew in a night. In both cases God alone brought it about. "There is no reason," says an acute critic of bygone days, "why we should think the confusion of tongues the work of a moment; for details could not be given in so short a notice. Who does not see that the early days of the human race are here given with the utmost brevity, and that the annals of many years are crowded between a few commas? It is more likely that discord was first sent among men, and that from this cause, leaving the work unfinished, they scattered into neighbouring regions, and gradually wandered farther and farther off; and that their languages gradually changed as they were thus isolated over the face of the earth. The facts may

[1] Bunsen's *Bibel Urkunden*, vol. i. p. 76. [2] See page 222.

have been brought succinctly together by Moses in his compendious narrative, but those interpreters surely err who think that they were carried out to completion by God almost as quickly as the verses themselves are read."[1]

An event so striking could not fail to perpetuate itself, more or less, in the traditions of the region; and, hence, it was only what might have been expected, when the early legends of Creation and the Flood were recovered from Assyria, that some reference should also be found to the Confusion of Tongues. Unfortunately, the tablets relating to it, which were brought to England by the lamented George Smith, are sadly mutilated, but even in their fragmentary state they are of great interest. So far as they are intelligible they run as follows:

"The thoughts of men's hearts were evil, so that the father of the gods turned from them. Babylon had corruptly turned to sin, and set about building a great Tower. Small and great joined in the task, mingling together (the materials for) the mound. This they did all the day, raising up their stronghold; but in the night the god Anu entirely made an end of it. In his anger, also, he poured out before the gods his secret counsel to scatter them abroad, and set his face against them, and for this end gave a command to make strange their speech, and thus hinder their progress. Numantir—the god of confusion—having gone down, they violently resisted him; but he cast them to the earth when they would not stop their work. They revolted against the gods, but sorely they wept for Babylon, and grieved very much (when their work was stopped and they were scattered abroad)."[2] It is

[1] Clerici, *Comment. in Genesin*, p. 105.

[2] Smith's *Chaldæan Genesis*, pp. 160–162. Chad. Boscawen, *Trans. Bib. Arch.*, vol. v. pp. 304–311.

curious to find that the very word used in Genesis, to explain the origin of the name "Babel," and which our Authorized Version renders "confound," is used in the legend of those who "mingled together" the mound, and whose designs were afterwards "mingled together" by the gods.

Echoes of the same tradition have reached us from other sources also. A quotation by Eusebius, from Abydenus, a Greek historian, who lived about two hundred years before Christ, informs us that "The Assyrians relate that the first men, sprung from the earth, defiant in their strength and giant size, and despising the gods, in the belief that they themselves were their superiors, undertook to build a high tower on the spot where Babylon now stands. It had already almost reached heaven, when the winds, aiding the gods, threw down the huge mass on the heads of the builders; and from these ruins Babylon was built. And whereas men, till then, had all spoken the same language, henceforth, by the operation of the gods, they spoke in different languages."[1]

Nor is even Western Antiquity without a tradition of the same kind. Homer sings how "the two giants began to set Ossa on Olympus and Pelion on Ossa, that they might climb to heaven; and would have succeeded, had they reached the age of manhood. But the Son of Jove destroyed them both before the hair had grown on their cheeks or the down on their chins."[2]

Even in the New World, indeed, there seems to have been a vivid remembrance in the ancient Indian races of

[1] Euseb., *Præparatio Evangelica*, ix. c. 14.

[2] *Odyss.*, xi. 315. The passage refers to two giant sons of Iphimedia and Neptune. Ovid repeats the fable, *Met.*, i. 151.

such a stupendous event as Genesis records. A Mexican manuscript, in the Vatican library, relates that, "Before the great inundation which took place four thousand eight hundred years after the creation of the world, the country of Anahuac was inhabited by giants. All who did not perish in the flood were turned into fishes, except seven who fled into caverns. When the waters subsided, one of the giants, surnamed the Architect, went to Cholula, where, as a memorial to the mountain Ilaloe, which had served as a refuge to himself and his six brethren, he built an artificial hill in the form of a pyramid. He ordered bricks to be made at the foot of the hills, and placed a file of men who passed them from hand to hand. But the gods beheld with wrath this building, the top of which was to reach the clouds; and, irritated at such an attempt, hurled fire on the pyramid. Numbers of the workmen perished, the work was discontinued, and the portion built was dedicated to the god of the air."[1] We are further told that, at the time of the Spanish conquest, the ruins of this pyramid were still called "the mountain of unburnt brick."[2]

The Jewish traditions of the building of the Tower are so curious that they deserve to be given.

"After the Flood," say the Rabbis, "men were afraid of another similar visitation, and forsook Palestine, the pleasant land, where Noah had last lived and sacrificed, and settled all together in one place, the plains of Shinar. There they no longer yielded themselves to the gentle guidance of godly Shem, the son of Noah, but cast away from themselves the kingdom of God, and did homage to

[1] Humboldt's *Researches*, vol. i. p. 96.

The Migration from Shinar, by Captain G. Palmer, R.N., contains a great many interesting facts as to the early settlement of America.

Nimrod, the son of Cush, the son of Ham. For Nimrod was a man mighty in strength and in power. Born when his father was old, he was dearly loved by him, and received from him a gift of the robe with which God had first clothed Adam, when he had to leave Paradise. This robe had passed from Adam to Enoch, and from him to Methusaleh and to Noah, who took it with him in the ark. There it was stolen by Ham and given secretly by him to his son Cush. Nimrod, when clothed with it, was irresistible and invincible. The birds and beasts of the woods fell before him, and he conquered all his enemies easily. Thus he made himself king of Babylon, and extended his rule continually, till, by his cunning, he made men regard him as the lord of the whole earth, and persuaded them to look no longer to God, but to trust only to their own powers. Hence it was said that since the beginning of the world there was no one like Nimrod, terrible and mighty in destroying—by the chase and by his words—and sinful in the sight of God."

"The longer Nimrod sat on his throne, the prouder he became. Having failed to kill the babe Abraham, as he desired, he slew 70,000 children, in the hope that the dreaded child might be among them. He was full of forebodings that his empire would fall, and that a man should rise who would revive that of Him to whom alone all the glory and the majesty of earth rightly belong. To prevent this, and to turn men wholly from God, he assembled his entire people, and said to them, 'Come, let us build a great city, and establish ourselves in it, that we may not be scattered over the whole earth, and drowned in a flood, as happened to our forefathers.' At that time the idea had got abroad that God intended to disperse men, the

better to get them under his power. 'Let us raise in the midst of the city a tower so high that no flood could rise above it, so strong that no fire, should one break out, could destroy it. Yes, let us do still more, let us build it up into the heavens, and stay it on them, on all its four sides, that it be steady, and that the waters in the skies may not fall on us. Let us therefore raise the top up to heaven, and cleave the sky with axes, that its waters may run out, and never again bring us into danger, and so we will avenge the destruction of our forefathers. Thus we will fight the Ruler of heaven, whose power lies only in these waters, and we will hurl arrows and darts at him, and set an idol image on the top of the tower, with a sword in its hand, to fight the King of heaven for us. Thus shall we gain a great name, and rule over the whole world.'

"Though all were not so foolish as to think of conquering heaven, and driving God from His throne, yet they complied with Nimrod's wishes. Many saw in the tower a real safeguard against men being scattered, or drowned by a flood. Others believed the scheme would advance the idolatry they loved. Therefore 600,000 men, among whom were 1,000 princes, set to work to build the tower, and raised it till its top was seventy miles high. When stone failed they had to burn bricks and carry them up; to help them in which there were steps on the east side for those going to the top, and on the west for those coming down. But the height and breadth of the tower were such that when the builders ran short of anything it was a year before they could get it. If a workman fell from the top it gave no one concern, but if a brick gave way, or fell over, it caused loud outcries and lamentations. The arrows which they shot off into the sky came back covered with

blood, so that in their folly they shouted, 'See, we have killed all that is in heaven.'

"Abraham was forty-eight years old when he saw this tower, the wickedness and folly of which he at once felt so deeply that he drew near and earnestly implored the builders to abandon the undertaking. But they laughed at him, and despised him as they would the stone lying on the earth. Then he raised his voice and cried to God, 'O Lord, confound and divide their speech, for I see only violence and hate in this city.' And the Lord called the seventy angels who are round His throne, and commanded them to confound the speech of the builders, so that they should no longer understand each other. Hence they had to give up building any more, and were divided into seventy peoples speaking as many different languages."

"The upper third of the tower was destroyed by fire, the lowest part overthrown by an earthquake, the middle only remaining."

If this strange medley of fancies be worth nothing more, it at least shows the kind of Biblical exposition in which the Rabbis delighted.

The hieroglyphics of Egypt add their testimony to the recital of Moses. "Egyptian traditions," says M. Chabas, "agree in a remarkable manner with the statements of Genesis. They attribute the dispersion of nations to a revolt of the wicked. In the texts of Edfou, published by Naville, we read that the good principle under the solar form of Harmachis, triumphed over its adversaries in the region south of the nome Apollinopolites. Of those who escaped the massacre, some emigrated to the south, and became the Cushites; others to the north, and became the Amou; a third column to the west, and became the Tama-

hou; and a fourth to the east, and became the Shasou. In this enumeration the Cushites include the negroes. The Tamahou are the white race of the north of Africa, the isles of the Mediterranean, and Europe. Among the Amou figure all the great nations of Central and Eastern Asia—Palestine, Syria, Asia Minor, Chaldæa, and Arabia, with the Bedouin of the desert and of 'the mountains of Asia.' Such was the Egyptian division of the great families of mankind."

"It may be noted that the red, yellow, black, and white races were all, more or less, under the direction and protection of the gods of Egypt, and that a place was made for the whole in the lower heaven. . . . The Egyptians considered all foreigners as branches of a great stem of which they themselves were the chief offshoot. They believed, moreover, that when mankind dispersed, at a time veiled in the twilight of mythology, they already knew the metals, and writing; could erect great buildings, and possessed a social and religious organization."[1]

The legend thus referred to seems to have been originally an Egyptian version of the story of the Flood. In it, as in Genesis, men are punished for a revolt against God, who exterminates all but a few. A sacrifice is, however, offered, and He promises never again to destroy the race in this way. But, as has been noticed, since a flood was the symbol and source of all prosperity and happiness, as associated in the Egyptian mind with the overflow of the Nile, they altered the tradition to suit their own ideas; and while causing men to perish by the direct action of the gods, substituted an inundation as a sign of their being appeased, in place of the rain-

[1] *Études sur l'Antiquité Historique*, pp. 97–100.

bow of Noah.[1] Ra, the god by whom men were destroyed, began his reign, it may be added, before the firmament was set over the earth, so that the legend refers to the earliest times of the world.[2]

How many stories of the Tower of Babel had been raised, when the work was suddenly stopped by Divine interference, is not told us in Genesis, but it appears certain that the seven to which Nebuchadnezzar carried it had not been reached. Seven was a sacred number of the Babylonians as well as of the Hebrews, and we may be sure that it was originally intended to raise it to that height, else it would not have been thought necessary to rebuild it on such a scale. From the form of other towers of which the ruins still remain, we may form some estimate of the condition in which this first one was left when so abruptly stopped. In the great tower-temple of Ur there were only three stories, and in the bas-relief at Kouyundjik, that of another city is represented with five. For these and others, in the larger cities of Babylon and Assyria,[3] the Tower of Babel, the oldest and most renowned, probably served as a model, and we may safely conclude that, if it had not been left unfinished, it would have had the sacred number of seven.[4]

The derivation of the word Babel, in Genesis, from Balal, "to confound," has, as already said, latterly found

[1] Naville, *Trans. Soc. Bib. Arch.*, vol. iv. pp. 1 ff. *Records of the Past*, vol. vi. p. 103. See p. 184.

[2] *Zeitschrift für Ægyptische Sprache* (1874), p. 57.

[3] Place, *Ninive et l'Assyrie*, vol. ii. p. 58.

[4] The Abbé Vigouroux derives the word Ziggurat, the Assyrian name for these towers, from Zakar, "to remember," "to keep in mind," so that it would mean "a memorial," "that which will preserve the name or memory." If this be right, it is in striking accordance with the words of Genesis, "Let us make us a name" ("mark," or "memorial"), ch xi. 4. Vigouroux, vol. i. p. 311. The Jewish tradition on pp. 227 ff. is from Beer, *Leben Abraham's*, pp. 7–9.

less favour among philological students than that from Bab-El, the gate or temple of the god El.[1] But the spelling of names changes greatly in the course of time, and this change affects their apparent origin. Thus Bethlehem originally meant "house of bread," but its present Arabic form, Beit-lahm, means "house of flesh." Oppert, in a similar way, has shown that however apt the new etymology of Babel may be, as the word is now spelled, it originally meant, as the Bible tells us, simply "confusion." Still more, the form "Babel" itself is proved by him to be a distinctly Assyrian derivation from Balal, "to confound;" while, if it had come through the Hebrew, it would have been "Bilbal," or "Bilbur," the actual Rabbinical word for "confusion."[2] In the same way "Borsippa" means "The tower of languages," though changed in later times to Bar Sab, "The shattered altar." Moreover, the character by which it is represented in the Assyrian tablets means, strange to say, in the opinion of Oppert, "The city of the dispersion of the tribes."[3]

[1] A. Maury. *Revue des Deux Mondes* (March 15, 1868), p. 477. See also, before, p. 25.

[2] *Buxtorf*, 309.

[3] Oppert, *Journal Asiatique*, vol. x. p. 220; vol. ix. p. 503. Lenormant, *Langue Primitive de la Chaldée*, p. 355.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE FIRST BEGINNINGS OF THE HEBREW NATION.

In the genealogical table of the tenth chapter of Genesis, Heber, the founder of the Hebrew race, is classed among the sons of Shem, through Arphaxad, and along with Elam, Asshur, Lud, and Aram. In other words, the Hebrews are connected by common descent with the people of Elymais or Elam on the Persian Gulf, east of the Tigris; with the Assyrians on the north-east of that river; with the people of Arphaxad, still farther north, among the mountains of Southern Armenia, immediately east of what is now the Lake Van; with the Lydians and the Semitic peoples of Asia Minor; and with the Aramean or Syrian nations stretching thence, south-east, to the Euphrates.

The tie by which the Hebrews felt themselves thus linked to these widely-separated nations could hardly have been their similarity of language: for the different tribes which bordered or settled in Palestine from the earliest ages, likewise spoke Semitic dialects, connected as closely as possible with the Hebrew; and yet they were never regarded as related to Israel. Nor did any special intimacy on their part with the chosen people account for the connection recognized; for, from an early age, the Jews were only a small tribe living far away in the remote south-west. It seems, rather, as if a strong tradition lingered among that

race of a primitive connection with them, either political or religious, or both ; as if, in early ages, the five future nationalities had formed one common state in the east, before their ancient confederacy was dissolved. The war of the various eastern kings, mentioned in the fourteenth chapter of Genesis, speaks of the likelihood of still earlier political revolutions in these regions ; while the tradition of Nimrod's attempt to found a world-empire, points, it may be, to the causes of wide national disruption.[1]

It is worthy of special remembrance in this connection, even at the risk of repetition, that, though for the last fifty years all the peoples speaking a language related to the Hebrew have been called Semitic, the term is vague and indefinite. In antiquity only a part of these races were known by this name ; and though such nations as the Phœnicians, Philistines, and others, who spoke languages more or less identical with the Hebrew, may have originally had the same common home as Israel—in an unknown pre-historical period—they were no longer reckoned by the Hebrews in Palestine as related to them, but as wholly foreign. Israel, in fact, belonged to an entirely distinct division of the same original stock.[2]

The name Abraham, now dignified for ever as that of the great forefather of the Hebrews, was in his day, that of others in the regions in which he lived. It occurs, for example, in ancient contracts, stamped on the clay tablets of Babylonia, as Abu-ramu, "the exalted Father," used as that of an officer at the court of Esarhaddon, who reigned from the year 681 to 668 B.C.

[1] In connection with the traditions of a queen called Semiramis having founded Damascus and Askelon, it is curious to notice that Semiramis was used as a Jewish name, in the form Shemiramoth (*masc.*), as far back as David's time. See 1 Chron. xv. 18, 20 ; xvi. 5.

[2] Ewald, *Geschichte*, vol. i. p. 404.

The tribe to which he belonged had its original seat in the district named from Arphaxad,[1] the head of the race, and hence known to the Greeks and Romans by the name of Arrapachitis. The name is, indeed, used as that of the chief ancestor of Abraham, at the distance of seven generations; but it cannot be certain whether it is only intended by this that the region called Arphaxad was the cradle of the Hebrew branch of the Semitic race, or whether the name is that of an individual; for, the tribe living in a district has often, in Scripture, the name of the district assigned it. It lies north of Assyria proper, and north-east of the upper Tigris, of Southern Armenia, about a hundred miles south of the modern city of Kars and of Mount Ararat, and is a tangle of wild hills, rising often to great heights, but intersected by fruitful valleys,[2] and in some places forming a table-land, as between the lakes Urumiah and Van. The name Arphaxad, in itself, indeed, bears witness to the earliest nationality of the region, for it seems to mean either "the border (land) of Chaldæa," or "the stronghold of the Chaldæans."[3]

The name Hebrew, first given to Abraham[4] by the Canaanites, and then to his descendants, as those who had come from beyond the great river Euphrates,[5] is handed down as that given by Israel also, in the form of Heber, to the ancient founder of their race. But the first glimpse of tribal life appears in the migration of Terah, the father of Abraham, from his native mountains to the plains of Mesopotamia; though it may be that in the names of earlier generations we have some hints of their remoter movements

[1] Gen. x. 22.
[2] *Dict. of Geog.*, art. "Armenia," vol. i.
[3] *Ewald*, vol. i. p. 405.
[4] Gen. xiv. 13.
[5] "Hebrew" comes from the Hebrew verb, "to cross over."

and history. Thus, Peleg, "a dividing,"—Heber's son,—seems to point to the separation of the Arabian branch of Joktan from the future Hebrew stem ;[1] Reu, "the friend," perhaps reminds us of Abraham's tender relation to Jehovah, though it may hint only at a maker of alliances among the hill tribes; Serug, still the name of a district a day's journey north of Haran, has the warlike sense of "the strong one;" Nahor seems to mean "the slayer;" Terah, "the wanderer;" and Haran, "the hill-man." What led Terah to emigrate with his tribe is not told us; possibly it was the same fierce pressure of tribes advancing from beyond, which commonly led to such movements; or perhaps it was a desire to share the rich pasture of the lowlands. His family consisted of three sons and one daughter, Sarah, the future wife of her half-brother Abraham; for, though the children of different mothers, they had a common father. One son, Haran, died in "Ur of the Chaldees," "the land of his nativity," leaving as his descendant, Lot, "a veil" or "covering," who afterwards passed on to Canaan with Abraham. Nahor, the second son, stopped on the way, at Haran, and became the grandfather of Laban, "the white Syrian," and Rebekah, the mother of Jacob and Esau. Milcah, or, in Assyrian, Milcat, "the princess," a daughter of Haran, and wife of Terah's son Nahor.—and Sarah, first called Sarai, "the princely one," then Sarah, "the princess," her name being in reality the Assyrian "Sarrat," a queen; with Iscah, "she looks abroad," another daughter of Haran not mentioned elsewhere, made up the aggregate heads of the tribe.

There has been no little dispute as to the locality of "Ur

[1] Gen. x. 25. Mr. Cyril Graham thinks that Peleg, which also means a river or water-course, refers to the cutting of some of those canals which are found in such numbers between the Tigris and the Euphrates. *Cambridge Essays*, 1858.

of the Chaldees," spoken of as the native land of Haran.[1] The name Uru has been found on tablets dug from the ruins now known as El Mugheir, to the south of Babylon and east of the Euphrates,[2] and this is apparently beyond question the region; for, apart from the testimony of the ruins themselves, it was still known as "the place of the Chaldees" shortly before the Christian era.[3] It has, indeed, been thought by many that it lay in the north, but the identification of the city with Edessa[4] and other northern places entirely fails. It seems probable that Ur became the name of a district as well as of a city, for the Greek Bible translates it "the country of the Chaldæans:" a name given, apparently in later times, when the race thus known migrated thither from the same mountainous north as had been the cradle of the Hebrews.[5]

The ruins of Mugheir rise on the west side of the Euphrates, in a vast mound so strewn with remains of bricks cemented by bitumen that the present name, which means "the town of asphalt or bitumen," has been given it from the fact. The plain around is so flat and low that, when the stream swells each year, the whole region becomes a lake, with Mugheir rising in its midst, approachable only by a boat.[6] But it was very different 4,000 years ago. The city was then flourishing; the arts and sciences were cultivated; astronomers watched the heavens; poets composed hymns and epics, and patient scribes stamped, on soft clay tablets,

[1] Gen. xi. 28, 31.

[2] Schrader, *Keilinschriften*, p. 42. See also Oppert's proofs in the *Jour. of Roy. Asiatic Soc.*, vol. xv. (1855), pp. 260–276.

[3] Eupolemus, a Greek writer, quoted by Eusebius, *Præp. Evang.*, ix. 17.

[4] Dean Stanley thinks Edessa was Ur, and gives a picturesque description of it as such. *Jewish History*, vol. i. p. 7.

[5] Ewald, vol. i. p. 406; Dillmann, p. 224.

[6] *Journ. Royal Asiat. Soc.* (1855), vol. xv. pp. 260–276.

the books which have in part come down to our day. For the ancient race which lived in these lands were, beyond most, given to writing and reading. There were libraries at Senkereh, Babylon, Borsippa, Cutha, Accad, Ur, Erech, Larsa, Nippur, Kalah Chergat, Calah, and Nineveh.[1] The waters of the Euphrates, moreover,—"the life of the land," —did not then flood the country, but spread in a network of sparkling canals and rivulets which carried fertility to the whole landscape.

Ur was one of the most ancient cities of Chaldæa, and at the time of Abraham must have been one of the most splendid. The Cushite population on the Lower Tigris and Euphrates had already conquered the Accadians, and were mingled with them, to form in the course of time the race known as Babylonians. Large numbers of bricks, stamped with characters more or less differing from those of later date, fortunately reveal the names of very early kings, and also of various under-lords of smaller districts, who are known as *patesi*, or princes, not as kings. Of the kings, two, known as Urukh and his son, Dungi, who, apparently, lived about 4,000 years before Christ, are the earliest known sovereigns of Ur.

The power of Urukh had originally extended over only the district round Ur, but had gradually absorbed most of Babylonia: no doubt as the result of fierce wars. A long and prosperous life had followed, marked by monuments more numerous than those of any other king except Nebuchadnezzar. Thus, at Ur itself, he had built at least three sacred structures of great size, besides a temple-tower to the moon, on a platform of brick about twenty feet high, from which it rose in we do not know how many stories; each,

[1] Vigouroux, vol. i. p. 160.

like those of Birs Nimrud, smaller than the one below. Abraham would daily see, in the northern part of the city, its huge height rising from the basement in a long square of 198 feet by 133 in the lower story, and 120 feet by 75 in the second, which is all that can now be traced: for time has utterly ruined it, in spite of its enormous strength. It was still unfinished when Urukh died; for clay cylinders found in the upper story show that later Babylonian kings contributed to its completion. But Urukh's prisoners of war and slaves must have toiled hard to raise even the part of it he constructed, for it is cased with ten feet thick of burnt bricks, enclosing a dense mass of others only sun-dried; bitumen, the mortar of those regions, binding the vast aggregate into a stony firmness. A sacred observatory tower rose over the highest story; and there, if it were finished before his day, the patriarch would see the watchers of the heavens—the oldest astronomers in the world—ever busy gathering what they believed to be the intimations of the stars, for the guidance of the king and people, in their public, private, and social life.[1] Numerous priests in flowing, embroidered robes, chanted their liturgies, offered sacrifice, drew omens, marched in long processions on their religious festivals, and presided in the temple-bounds over courts of justice; while in the city were found all the trades and professions which such a development of worship implies.

But Ur was not the only city which King Urukh embellished. The ruins of a temple-tower begun by him at Warka, and finished by his son, Dungi, with its corners exactly facing the four cardinal points, still rise a hundred

[1] Observations of eclipses commenced at Babylon B.C. 2228, 1,983 years before the capture of the city by Alexander the Great. Conder, *Bible Handbook*, p. 18.

feet above the plain ; and so huge was the whole structure that more than 30,000,000 bricks must have been used in its construction.[1] Others of the same character, a succession of receding towers standing one on another, with an observatory above all, had been built by him in other cities also, and doubtless stood in all their glory in the time of Abraham. In all, the position was exactly that of the tower at Warka. The style is primitive and simple, the bricks of many sizes and badly fitted together, with mud as cement for the sun-dried, and bitumen for that of the burnt; the walls sloping inwards to make them stronger, with arched drains underneath, to secure dryness. In each city the tower was dedicated to the local god ; whether the sun or the moon, or one of the planets ; or to Sarili, the king of the gods. Two dedication tablets of that of Ur, fortunately, still remain. "Urukh, king of Ur, built the temple of the god Sin (the moon) :" and "Urukh, king of Ur, raised a temple to the god Sin, his lord, and also built the fortified wall of Ur." The moon was, indeed, the great god of the city ; its splendour in the dark eastern skies, and its importance in astronomical studies, giving it a rank even above that of the sun in this district, as in some others.[2] Nor were his temples the only architectural glories of Urukh's reign. A great palace at Ur, known as that of the "supreme prince," further confirmed his claims as one of the great builders of the ancient world. The very extent of the city attests its splendour and that of its ruler, for even its remaining ruins measure four-fifths of a mile across, while its wall, still traceable, is over four miles in circumference.

[1] Rawlinson's *Ancient Monarchies*, vol. i. p. 199. Vigouroux, vol. i. p. 352.

[2] It was from its worship of the moon that Ur got the name of Kamarina in later times, from Arabian, Kamar, "the moon." The sun was regarded as only a goddess, or as the son of the moon ; which, on the other hand, was a god.

Other kings followed Urukh and his son, and built more temples; the best known of them bearing the name of Gudea, of whom more inscriptions survive than of any other. But the chief ruler of Western Asia in these remote times was Sargon, king of Accad, a town of Babylonia which ultimately lost its supremacy by the overshadowing greatness of Babylon itself. He founded the first Semitic empire on the Euphrates, and established a great library in his capital. The seal of his librarian—Ibni Sarru—of very beautiful workmanship, is now in Paris. The date of his reign has been fixed by the strange discovery of a passage in a cylinder of Nabonidos, the last king of Babylon, who was overthrown by Cyrus, 539 years before Christ. The cylinder was found in the ruins of the Temple of the Sun-god at Sippara, and tells us, in the king's words: "I sought for the old foundation stone, and eighteen cubits deep I dug into the ground, and the foundation stone of Naram Sin, the son of Sargon, I found, which for 3,200 years no king before me had seen, the Sun-god, the great lord of E-Babara, the temple of the seat of the goodness of his heart, let me see, even me." Thus, in the opinion of Nabonidos, Naram Sin reigned 3,200 years before him, that is to say, more than 3,700 years before Christ. Nothing is known of the way in which Sargon came to the throne, but a tablet containing omens gives several of the expeditions undertaken by him and by his son. He attacked the Hittites of the Upper Euphrates, subdued certain states in Babylonia, made expeditions against the Syrians, and penetrated as far as the Mediterranean Sea. After this he put an end to a revolt which arose in his own dominions, and wasted with fire and sword the region called Sumasti, supposed to be a part of Elam. Amongst other things, also, he rebuilt

the city of Agade, and either rebuilt or restored the great temple of the goddess Anunit. He also founded a city which he called after his own name, Dur Sargina, "the fortress of Sargon," on the site of an old Chaldæan town.

The British Museum has an inscribed egg of veined marble, dedicated by Sargon to the Sun-god of Sippara; and the standard book on astronomy, *The Observations of Bel*, in seventy-two divisions, dealing with such subjects as the phases of Venus, the conjunction of the sun and moon, and the appearance of comets, was compiled for his library, at Accad, his capital. Babylonian astronomy is seen, from the many records of eclipses in this huge book, to have been ancient even then.

Sargon's empire extended from Elam, beyond the Tigris, to Cyprus, where a cylinder was lately found, on which the first owner described himself as the servant or worshipper of Sargon's deified son and successor, Naram Sin. This son coveted the copper and turquoise mines of Sinai, and marched thither and conquered the region. But it had been known at an earlier time in Babylonia. Among the monuments found at Telloh in South Chaldæa—amidst inscriptions going back to the very beginning of Chaldæan art and writing, the original pictorial forms of the characters being only thinly disguised, and their position being still, like Chinese, one over the other—are seated figures of diorite, a very hard stone, brought, as an inscription on one says, "from the land of Magan," that is, Sinai. The writing is of a period before Sargon, or the rise of the Semitic race, so that before 3750 B.C. blocks of stone were transported from Sinai to the stoneless plains of Babylon. The Sinai quarries were worked by the Egyptians, perhaps 6,000 years ago. In the museum at Cairo there is a diorite

statue of Khephren, of the fourth dynasty—evidently of the same school of sculpture as the statues of Telloh. Diorite is foreign in Egypt as much as in Babylonia, and, very curiously, one of the figures of Telloh has a plan of the city carved on its lap, of which the standard of measurement is the same as that used by the builders of the Egyptian pyramids—the cubit in each being quite different from the later Assyrio-Babylonian cubit.

Before the Semitic kingdom of Sargon, however, Babylonia was in the hands of the Accado-Sumerian race, who, as we have seen, spoke a language allied to that of the modern Turks and Finns, and had invented or adopted the cuneiform, or wedge-shaped, system of writing, and developed the earliest known civilization of Chaldæa—perhaps, however, not really the first. Memorials of them have been discovered at Telloh, including inscriptions, etc., which seem to carry back the story of these regions to the fourth millennium before Christ. In these mounds, which cover the remains of a city now known as Shirpurla, a figure of a bull finely cut, and a tablet of black stone, with the name of Dungi on it, have been discovered, and bricks inscribed with the names of twelve or thirteen of the local under-kings. The writing is earlier than that which survives elsewhere; at least in the case of that on bronze or stone, for cuneiform or wedge-shaped characters are, also, found on a clay cylinder of one of the kings of a later date. Of one prince, eight statues, two large clay cylinders, and hundreds of fragments of small texts have been recovered.

In the days when Shirpurla flourished, Chaldæa obtained wood for building, from the coasts and islands of the Persian Gulf, and from the Peninsula of Sinai, from which, also, gold and diorite were brought. There was trade,

besides, with Phœnicia and Syria. Cedars and other trees were brought from Mount Amanus, the range at the angle between Syria and Asia Minor, and the stone for building came from other parts—especially, it would seem, from Syria, being taken across to the sources of the Euphrates and then floated, on rafts, down the stream. Other countries, not yet identified, are mentioned in the inscriptions. Many gods, also, are named in them and counterparts of those of later ages, in Babylonia; and we read of castles, temples, towers in stages, observatories, palaces, warriors, priests, husbandmen, canals, precious stones, metals, and much else, showing a high and varied civilization.

The dynasty of Sargon was overthrown by a king named Khammaragas, the first ruler over all Babylonia, in B.C. 2282, though a local dynasty had established itself at Babylon as early as B.C. 2394. The rise of the empire of Khammaragas, who reigned fifty-five years, brought with it a revival of learning and literature, such as has marked the rise of the kingdom of Sargon. The calendar was, it would appear, reformed, and the great work we now treasure on its ancient clay tablets, giving us all that was then known on astronomy and astrology, put into the shape in which it has come down to us, though it had already been in existence, in other forms, we know not how long. It is strange to find that, even at this early date, Susa, one of the future capitals of the Persian kings, was a prominent city.

There are, indeed, no means of fixing the rise of civilization in these lands; for the British Museum has mud-bricks stamped with the names and titles of kings who must have reigned long before Sargon, and the latest researches show that even the civilization of China was derived from Western Asia. There is proof, also, of as early an intercourse

between Babylonia and India, teak-wood being found in the ruins of Mugheir, and an ancient Babylonian list of articles of dress mentions Sindhu-muslin—the Sindon of the Greeks : a word meaning "Indian," and explained in Accadian as "vegetable cloth," or cotton.

Such indications of immemorial civilization and culture on the Euphrates help us to realize the social and moral world amidst which Abraham found himself, at Ur and elsewhere, in Mesopotamia. He lived in no rude and primitive state of things, even in religion, for the Accadian and Semitic religious ideas had acted and reacted on each other through ages before the Patriarch's birth, till they had blended into one highly developed theology, with its elaborate hierarchy and ritual under the final supremacy of the Semitic invaders.

If the earliest dwellings in Chaldæa were simple huts of branches, in the days of Abraham these had been superseded by solid houses of brick ; the alluvial soil yielding exhaustless supplies of clay for every kind of structure. The houses, with fanciful designs painted outside, like the temple-towers, stood on platforms. To shut out the heat, the walls of the better class were very thick. The windows were high up and small ; the rooms long, narrow, and gloomy, and all opened one into the other ; while a central arch formed the entry from without. Trees planted all round served to protect the inmates from the overpowering rays of the sun. Whether Terah and Abraham lived in houses, however, or pitched their tents, as is still done by Arabs, outside the city gate, is a matter of question. Mugheir appears to have been abandoned about B.C. 500 ; but it and Erech continued to be what they had been from the earliest times, great sacred burial cities, like Abydos in an-

cient Egypt. The dead were interred with great care and devotion in vast sepulchral mounds, which were thoroughly drained; the body being commonly laid on its left side, with a copper bowl with some dates or other food in its hand; the right one being laid over the bowl as if the departed were eating. The seal, in the shape of a cylinder, worn in life on the wrist, was left there, and cups for drinking, generally of bronze, were placed near.

The arts of life surrounded the patriarch in this region to an extent we could hardly have anticipated.[1] Hand-made pottery of many kinds abounded; as if the potter's wheel were not already plied as dexterously as it is to-day, to create the many shapes of jars, and vessels, and lamps which are yet found in the old Chaldæan graves. Clay tablets stamped with figures and groups of men and animals, displayed the simple skill of the artist, and the stone engraver carved designs of human or divine forms on cylinders of serpentine, jasper, and other stones; to be used for impressing the device on soft clay tablets by rolling it over them. A fine cylindrical seal of the age of King Urukh, recovered by Ker Porter, but subsequently lost, has been copied in various books. A royal personage sits in an arm-chair, the hind legs of which are carved into the form of deer's legs. He is dressed in a long robe with sleeves, reaching to his ancles, and a hat like many of the felt ones of to-day, while three figures before him, apparently female, have long, flounced, embroidered, and striped dresses, marking a great advancement in textile manufactures. Nor is this so strange, when we remember

[1] The excavations conducted at Niffer (Nippur), Warka, Mugheir, and elsewhere have revealed a new form of speech resembling the Turanian family of languages, but with a vocabulary which is "decidedly Cushite or Ethiopian;" approaching, in fact, the Mahra of Southern Arabia, and the Galla of Abyssinia.

that, already in Joshua's day, a Babylonish garment kindled the greed of Achan.[1] Fragments of linen are said to have occurred in the tombs, and the head, in some of them, has been found resting on the remains of a "tasselled cushion of tapestry." Nor were other arts unknown. Sun dials marked the hours of the day, which had already been divided as we now have them; and though stone tools and weapons were still in use, the smith and the jeweller furnished the field, the camp, the house, and the person with a long list of implements, weapons, and ornaments in various metals.

The plain of Mugheir, though now desolate and marshy, was once wondrously fertile. Created by the alluvial deposits of the Euphrates, it rivalled the productiveness of Egypt, watered by the Nile: insomuch that Sir Henry Rawlinson has thought it the site of the garden of Eden. The ruins of Ur lie more than two degrees north of the Persian Gulf, but in Abraham's time the sea extended much farther in that direction than at present; the vast deposits of the Tigris and Euphrates adding new land to their delta, according to those best fitted to judge, at so rapid a rate, that a tract of country not less than a hundred and thirty miles from north to south, and from sixty to seventy broad, has been gained from the sea, for the most part since the patriarch's day;[2] Ur, and even Babylon, being then ports from which ships traded far and near.

From the month of May to November it seldom rains in Chaldæa, and the soil is scorched by the burning sun. The Tigris reaches its highest floods about the time when

[1] Josh. vii. 21.

[2] Rawlinson, *Ancient Monarchies*, vol. i. p. 6. The growth of the land was formerly, according to some, a mile in 30 years; now it is a mile in about 66. Vigouroux, vol. i. p. 334. See before, p. 96.

the rains cease, in May; beginning to rise in March and sinking rapidly in the end of May, till it reaches its lowest in June. The rise of the Euphrates, drawn from the northern slopes of the mountains of Armenia, begins a fortnight later, but lasts longer; overflowing the banks far and near, and sometimes causing great disasters. In the time of Abraham, however, the waters were utilized, and danger prevented, by the system of canals, river dykes, and sluices, in use; which enabled the inhabitants to regulate the inundation as they pleased. Channels of greater or less size, skilfully formed, led the quickening moisture to the roots of every tree or plant. Freely expended when the leaves and flowers were yet to form they were less so when the fruit had set, while very little was given where it had reached its full size, and only wanted ripening.[1]

It is hard to realize, from the marshy flats of the south, or the dry, dusty stretches of the north of Chaldæa, what the country must have been when the innumerable canals, once the boastful glory of ancient monarchs, but now dry and well-nigh effaced, distributed far and near the waters of the great river. Mr. Loftus, however, gives us a glimpse of its appearance when the waters have begun to fill what irrigating channels still remain; and thus helps to revivify the distant past. "Nothing," says he, "could exceed the beauty and luxury of the riverside and its now verdant borders. Bee-eaters, kingfishers, herons, pigeons, hawks, and other birds, in all their bright and varied plumage, were flying about, uttering their several cries and scarcely deigning to notice the presence of human beings." Elsewhere he speaks of a thick forest of luxuriant date-trees fringing the bank on each side of the river, which supplies

[1] Allen, *Abraham, his Life, Times, etc.*, p. 3.

the necessary moisture for their nourishment, and for the cultivation of cereals, which flourish even under the shade of the palms. The ebb and flow of the tide is perceptible twenty miles above Korna ; quite eighty miles from the Persian Gulf.[1]

Chaldæa produced neither the fig, the olive, nor the vine, but it had a treasure in the palm which made up for their absence. The most beautiful of trees, it is also the most varied in usefulness. Its fruit, hanging in clusters of amber or gold, is at once pleasant to the eye, delicious, and nourishing,—the food of the poor and the luxury of the rich. The very kernels, when broken up, feed the goats. An incision in the stem yields a drink which takes the place of wine. The crown which grows from the top, and the inner fibres and pith, are boiled for food. Mats and baskets are made from the leaves, while the stem furnishes pillars, roofing, and furniture. In Abraham's day it grew almost in forests, in Chaldæa.[2] The whole district indeed was amazingly fertile and highly cultivated. Shady with palms, tamarisks, and acacias, it was also rich in pomegranates, and golden with fields of the finest wheat. Millet and sesame grew to a fabulous height, and all kinds of corn plants produced two or even three hundred fold.[3] Such was the enchanted land which Abraham, at the summons of God, was to exchange for the land of Canaan.

The life of Abraham in Chaldæa seems to have been nearly, if not actually, contemporary with the final triumph of the great religious revolution which Sargon had begun, nearly two thousand years before, while ruling in Babylonia. Till his day the mingled Sumirs and Accadians had followed

[1] *Chaldæa and Susiana*, p. 275.
[2] Herodotus, i. 193; Strabo, xvi. i. 14; Pliny, *Hist. Nat.*, xviii. 17.
[3] Lenormant, *La Magie*, p. 114.

a simple and primitive nature worship, different in each town or district; and had not as yet grouped their local divinities into any graduated celestial hierarchy. Their religion, indeed, consisted chiefly in meagre rites; their ideas of the gods were vague and indefinite. But under the Semitic supremacy of Sargon, the new religious ideas of his race struck root, and gradually superseded the Accadian magic and sorcery by an elaborate idolatry which ultimately established itself over all Mesopotamia, and spread far and wide from it over Western Asia, till Babylon became for many ages the religious head of the nations from the great river to the Mediterranean, as Rome was that of Christendom before Luther. Yet this was reached only by a slow and, at first, disputed advance through many generations, though the mythology of the Euphrates region was already elaborated, and its gods definitely formed into a finely graded hierarchy, about four thousand years before the Christian era: the system then in its glory, flourishing with no essential change till Nineveh and Babylon had perished.

As in India the old Vedic religion was supplanted by the Brahminical schools, and countless gods took the place of the earlier simple religion; so on the Euphrates, new divinities, introduced by the poets and theologians of that distant age, had long ago displaced the faith of the past. Was this the immediate cause of Abraham being divinely "called" to leave a country which had become the fountain-head of idolatry in Western Asia? In such an atmosphere Abraham and his descendants could not have founded a pure religion.

It is intensely interesting to look back to these glimpses of the rise of great religious systems in extreme antiquity.

Strange to say, some of the very hymns which marked the growing development of Chaldæan idolatry remain to our day; hymns which Abraham may often have heard rising in measured chant and antiphony from priestly choirs at Ur. One, addressed to the moon, extols it as the "Lord, the prince of gods of heaven and earth;" the "Father-god, enlightening the earth;" the "good god;" "the god of the month;" "the Lord of the alabaster house;" "the Lord of crowns;" "the Lord, duly returning;" "the awarder of kingdoms;" "who raises himself by humbling the proud;" "the crescent, mighty-horned;" "the doom-dealer, shining with rounded orb;" "the self-produced, issuing from his home, and pouring forth ever plenteous brightness;" "the high exalted, all producing;" "the Father, who in his circuit renews life in all lands;" "the Lord, whose godhead spreads awe of him, as far and wide as sea and sky;" "the guardian of shrines in the land of Accad;" "the sire of gods and men, the guide of childhood;" "the primeval seer, the sole rewarder, fixing the doom of distant days;" "the unshaken chief, whose gracious heart is ever forgetful of its wrongs;" "whose blessings, ever flowing, never cease;" "the leader of the gods, who, from depth to height, bright piercing, opens the gate of heaven."

It continues:—

Father mine, of life the giver, cherishing, beholding all!
Lord, whose power benign extends over all in heaven and earth!
Thou drawest forth from heaven the seasons and the rains;
Thou watchest life and yieldest showers!
Who in heaven is high exalted? Thou, sublime is thy reign!
Who, on earth? Thou, sublime is thy reign!
Thou revealest thy will in heaven, and celestial spirits praise thee,
Thou revealest thy will below, and subduest the spirits of earth,

Thy will shines in heaven like the radiant light ;
On earth thy deeds declare it to me.
Thou, thy will, who knoweth ? With what can man compare it ?
Lord ! in heaven and earth, thou Lord of gods, none equals thee.[1]

Idolatry was, indeed, striking its roots deep and wide. Ea, the special benefactor of men, was also the patron of irrigation ; so vitally needed in those regions. Sin, the moon, of brickmaking and building ; San or Shamas, the Sun-god, of war ; Nergal, of hunting ; and other deities presided over life in other aspects. The planets and the constellations were consecrated to gods, or rather, regarded as Divine ; primitive astronomy measured days and months, and years and cycles, and recorded all the movements and appearances of the heavens, to fix the holy seasons and to read the story of the gods ; and astrology drew auguries of good and evil from the phenomena thus observed, to guide men in every detail of their public, private, and social life. Magic and divination, moreover, had their special seat on the Euphrates ; and magician priests claimed to avert, by countless spells and incantations, the malignity of innumerable genii and evil spirits which filled the air, the earth, and the abyss below it.

Abraham grew up amidst all this idolatry and superstition. But to use a figure from the Institutes of Menu, his soul remained pure as a white lily in muddy waters amidst the seductive influences which won over even Terah, his father. In a household which "served other gods"[2] than Jehovah, he remained, from the first, true to the better faith, perhaps brought by his race, long before, from their native mountains in the north. The strength of character, the high religious feeling, and the firm courage which this

[1] Lenormant, *Les Prem. Civilisations*, vol. ii. p. 158. [2] Josh. xxiv. 2.

implied, attest a moral greatness of nature. For, wherever he turned, idolatry invited him. In the rising sun he saw a god worshipped by the people of Larsa and Sippara as their defender, and, as in Egypt, bearing different names at morning, noon, and evening. Terah would tell him that it rose as Oud, the sun of life, the foe of demons and sorcerers, and sank as Nindar, into the lower world, to light up the dark realms of death and of the dead. The Maskim, mighty demons who lived in the hollow of the earth, were its giant guardians,[1] receiving it as it entered. Mercury, the star of the god Nebo, was "prince of the men of Haran," the district where Terah was to live in his later years, and where he died. The planet Jupiter was the star of Merodach, the patron god of Babylon.[2] The five planets were the interpreters of the will of God, and as such, were so closely watched, that the library of King Sargon had a special treatise on all the phases of Mars. The very sign for a divinity in Accadian was a star. Twelve chiefs of the gods presided in turn over each month and each sign of the Zodiac, assisted by thirty stars as "counsellor gods;" fifteen above and fifteen below the earth.[3]

Despite all this idolatry, there still, however, lingered some traditions of earlier and better days. Legends passed from lip to lip—of the Creation; of the revolt of the evil spirits; of the innocence, temptation, and fall of man; of the Deluge, and the deliverance of Noah and his family; of the Tower of Babel and the Confusion of Tongues. They were cherished, however, not by the old Accadians, but rather in the Cushite or Semitic stock;

[1] Lenormant, *Magie*, p. 26.
[2] Prof. Sayce. *Trans. Soc. Bib. Arch.*, vol. iii. p. 175. [3] *Ibid.*, vol. iii. p. 148.

these two names as yet implying the same people. The prevailing idolatry was a development of the old religion of the Accadians; but for this development and for the traditions we are indebted to their conquerors.

Sacred usages, originally of Divine origin, but sadly corrupted in Abraham's day, also survived. The summits of all the mighty tower-temples with which the country abounded, had their altars, on which sacrifices were offered to the gods, in the belief that they would come down only to such lofty sanctuaries; an idea natural to a people still clinging to their tradition that the seat of the immortals was on "the Mountain of the East," or "the Mountain of the World," from whose foot their ancestors had come. The ram and the bull were day by day slain and burnt to propitiate the gods. Nor was this the worst, for the Semitic race had learned from the Accadians,[1] the awful practice of human sacrifice,—households, in time of special trouble, even presenting their eldest son as a burnt offering for the sins of the family. But, amidst all this fearful degeneracy of religious ideas, the patriarch would hear the seventh day spoken of as "the day of rest for the heart," on which even the king dared not ride out in his chariot, or eat flesh cooked at the fire or in the smoke, or wear white, or offer sacrifice, or issue decrees, or let an augur give his auguries, or take medicine, or speak in public, or change his clothes, or utter a curse, or violate other details of a long list of minute restrictions.[2]

[1] Sayce, *Trans. Soc. Bib. Arch.*, vol. iv. p. 26.

[2] Fox Talbot, *Trans. Soc. Bib. Arch.*, vol. v. p. 427. Sayce, *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 76. The seventh day, on which no business was done, was called *Sabattew*, and "a day of the rest of the heart," or "day of rest." The week-days were called after the seven planetary gods.

The sacredness of the number seven was already deeply rooted in the non-Semitic and pre-Semitic Babylonian literature and thought. It shows itself in the Sumerian-

With all this excessive religiousness in the outward form, there was, however, as little conception of the essence of true religion as in later heathen nations; for the old Accadian writings seem to know no other sin than such neglect of the established rites as seeking the favour of evil spirits by unholy arts, instead of winning over the good spirits by the authorized formulæ, duly performed by priestly magicians.[1] The immortality of the soul was, however, universally held; for the tablets speak of the spirit flying up like a bird to heaven, and we still have prayers for the dying, that the "Sun, greatest of the gods, may receive the saved soul into his holy hands."[2] There is, moreover, among the inscriptions, a fine one, not yet fully translated, describing the soul in heaven, "the land of the Silver Light," clothed in white shining garments, seated in the company of the blessed and fed by the gods themselves, with celestial food. So correctly had this great truth of the first religion been preserved to those times. The belief in demoniacal possession was universal, and indeed all diseases and personal calamities were attributed to it. Every one wore charms and talismans to guard him against evil influences always hovering round; and, as in our own day, holy water was in vogue as a further means of driving them away.[3] The resurrection of the dead was also an article of the public creed, for Marduk or Merodach is addressed as "He who raises the dead to life."[4] After death the sun was "the Judge of

Accadian idiom and in the Assyrio-Semitic adaptations of that. There are *seven* spirits of the deep, who hear no prayer or entreaty. The wife who is exorcising evil spirits must tie *seven* knots at the side of her sick husband, twice over. The serpent mentioned in the Hymns has *seven* heads. The palm is represented with *seven* fronds. The sacred tree has *seven* branches in the early representations.—Schrader, K.A.T. 21. *Studien und Kritiken*, 1874, 343.

[1] Lenormant, *La Magie*, p. 139.
[2] *Trans. Soc. Bib. Arch.*, vol. ii. p. 30.
[3] *Ibid.*, vol. iv. p. 50.
[4] *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 30.

Men.' Like the Egyptians, the people among whom Abraham sojourned believed that the actions of men would hereafter be weighed in a balance—the good deeds against the bad—and sentence pronounced accordingly.[1] Still more, there lingered beneath the surface of the gross polytheism in vogue, the remembrance, however faint, of the supreme pristine truth of the Unity of God, though sadly obscured to the multitude by the pantheism and idolatry which had gradually confounded the Creator with His creation, and degraded the Godhead into multitudinous deities displaying their presence in the phenomena of nature.[2]

To have kept true to the lofty faith with which he is identified, amidst such communities, and in spite of the apostasy of his father's house; to have turned aside from all that was degraded, superstitious, or false in the popular beliefs around him, while singling out and cherishing all that was divine and pure, implies in Abraham a grandeur of soul, and an instinctive perception of the true and eternal, which place him in the foreground of human greatness. Yet to ascribe to him any powers or qualities however lofty cannot fully explain so unique a phenomenon; there must have been, besides—as Scripture affirms—a direct revelation and heavenly guidance. Even a writer so calm and unprejudiced as Max Müller can account for it in no other way.[3]

[1] *Trans. Soc. Bib. Arch.*, vol. ii. p. 32.
[2] Lenormant, *Histoire Ancienne*, vol. i. p. 452.
[3] See p. 23.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE MIGRATION OF ABRAHAM.

The early fusion of the simple Accadian nature-worship with the Cushite or Semitic astro-theology was an event of the first importance, not only for the age in which it took place, but for the whole future history of the world. Henceforward, idolatry rapidly developed itself, and boasted a long hierarchy of gods, an established caste of priests, a minutely prescribed ritual, and the authority of recognized position. They were in their full glory at the time of Abraham's sojourn in Mesopotamia, and the constant tendency of his descendants in after ages to revert to it, shews the influence they already had on his tribe, before he migrated with it to Canaan.[1]

The spirit of idolatry, moreover, especially in its first vigour, has always been persecuting; and it is easy to believe that the legends of Abraham having suffered for his resolute worship of the One God, may embody the truth.

Jewish tradition, indeed, represents the patriarch as faithful to Jehovah even from childhood. One beautiful story describes him, fancifully enough, as having lived in early boyhood in a cave, and as coming out only after he was a growing lad. "When he first left it," says the legend, "looking up at the heavens over him, and round

[1] It is a curious fact that, though their forefathers left the Euphrates so many ages before, the Jews to the last retained their fondness for Asiatic idolatry.

upon the earth, he began to think, 'Who could have created all this?' Presently, the sun rose in splendour, and he thought this must be the Maker of the universe, and threw himself down before it, in worship, the whole day long. But when evening came the sun sank, and Abraham now thought, this could not be the Creator of all. Then the moon rose in the east, and the countless army of the stars came forth. 'Surely the moon is the Lord of all, and the stars are the host of his servants,' cried Abraham, and bowed himself before the moon and worshipped it. But the moon went down, the light of the stars faded, and the sun appeared again on the edge of the sky. Then he said, 'Truly all these heavenly bodies together could not have created the universe; they listen to the voice of an Unseen Ruler, to whom all owes its being; Him alone will I henceforward worship; before Him only will I henceforth bow.'"[1]

The legend goes on to tell us that in those days idolatry spread widely. Nimrod and his people, and Terah and his whole house, worshipped images of wood and stone. Terah, indeed, had not only twelve idols, according to the twelve months, to whom in succession he offered sacrifices, but also he made idols and sold them. But Abraham, now fifty years old, returning to his father's house, was sore distressed at this false worship, and set himself to show its folly and worthlessness, that he might teach his father a better way.

When, now, one day, Terah had been from home, and had trusted Abraham to sell the idols, the patriarch resolved to delay no longer carrying out his purpose. He therefore asked each buyer his age, and when told, asked him again, if at his time of life he were not ashamed to

[1] Beer's *Leben Abraham*, p. 3.

pray to the work of men's hands. One buyer having said that he was seventy, Abraham asked him, If he really meant to worship the idol? "Of course," answered the buyer, "he is my god." "Indeed," replied Abraham, "then you are older than your god; you are seventy, and this god was made yesterday." One day a woman came with a dish full of fine meal, and asked that it be set before the gods. As soon as she had gone, Abraham took a stick and broke in pieces all the gods except the largest, in whose hands he put the stick. But when his father came back and saw his idols destroyed, he asked who had done this? "Why should I deny it?" replied Abraham. "A woman brought a dish full of fine flour and asked me to set it before the gods. But hardly had I done so before each wanted it, and hearing them clamouring thus for it, the biggest of them took a stick and broke the rest in pieces." "How can you mock me?" retorted Terah. "Have idols reason?" Then Abraham answered. "Do not your ears hear what your mouth speaks?" But Terah, infuriated at him, took him to Nimrod, that he might be punished. "If you will not worship the gods of your father," said the king, "then worship fire." "Why not water," replied Abraham, "which puts out fire?" "Well then, worship water." "Why not, rather, the clouds which hold the water?" "Very well, worship the clouds as well." "But why not, rather, the wind which blows the clouds away?" "Well, worship the wind." "Why not, rather, men, who can resist the wind?" But now Nimrod lost patience, and told him that he spoke only folly. Fire was *his* god, and he would throw him into it—"and," added he, "may *your* God come and save you from it."

The legend goes on to say that Abraham was forthwith bound on a huge pile of wood, but the flames were suddenly extinguished by a fountain which sprang up from beneath; the wood changed into blossoming fruit trees; a delightful garden grew around, and angels were seen sitting in it with Abraham in their midst.[1]

The scene of this legend is said to have been Edessa, the present Oorfa, a town lying at the foot of one of the bare rugged spurs of the Armenian Mountains, in the district called Padan-Aram—the "plains of Aram" or Syria.[2] A high crested crag, the natural fortification of the present citadel, doubly defended by a trench of immense depth, cut out of the living rock behind it, is a striking feature of the city. Another is, an abundant spring issuing in a pool of transparent clearness, and embosomed in a mass of luxuriant verdure, which, amidst the dull brown desert all around, makes, and must always have made, this spot an oasis, a paradise, in the Chaldæan wilderness. Round this sacred pool, "the beautiful spring,"—"Callirhoe,"—as it was called by the Greek writers, gather the modern traditions of the patriarch. Hard by, amidst its cypresses, is the mosque, on the spot where he is said to have offered his first prayer; the cool spring itself was the one that burst forth in the midst of the fiery furnace which the infidels had kindled to burn him; its sacred fish, swarming by thousands and thousands, from their long-continued preservation, are cherished by the faithful as under his special patronage, and two Corinthian pillars which stand on the crag are said to commemorate his deliverance.[3] Nor is it at all certain that these legends have not a centre of historical

[1] Beer's *Leben Abraham*, pp. 16–21. [2] Aram means "the Highlands."
[3] Stanley's *Jewish Church*, vol. i. p. 7.

truth, for the expression of Isaiah [1] that God had "redeemed Abraham," or "delivered him from death," seems to imply lifelong danger in his earlier career, danger from which his removal to Canaan, in the providence of God, delivered him.

It was not at Edessa, however, but at Haran, the Carrhæ of the Greeks and Romans, famous as the scene of the defeat of Crassus by the Parthians,[2] that Terah and his tribe settled, and Abraham spent the last years of his Mesopotamian life. This pastoral region was to become so distinctively the home of that portion of the race which remained on the far side of the Euphrates, that it became known as the "town of Nahor,"[3] and is frequently mentioned in the Assyrian inscriptions as Aramaic or Syrian—which the nationality of Terah's descendants implies.

A vast limestone plateau, seamed by deep ravines, extends east and north-east of Oorfa, but sinks into an alluvial plain to the south. On the slope of a low hill in the midst of this lies Haran, looking out over a wide and richly fertile level, of more than twenty square miles in extent. A circle of low volcanic hills shuts in the view and marks the character of the landscape towards the Euphrates. Small brooks appear after rains, but they soon disappear, and leave the open expanse to the fierce heat of the sun. In winter the temperature is low, but in summer the heat is intolerable, especially when the wind blows from the Southern Arabian desert. October and November see all traces of vegetation burnt up, except on the edge of any trickle of water; but, as soon as rain falls, all nature revives, though only to be speedily withered by the winter winds. Spring alone covers the soil with a comparatively more abiding

[1] Isa. xxix. 22. [2] Plutarch, *Vit. Crass.*, 25, 27, 28. [3] Gen. xxiv. 10.

carpet of grass, varied by countless flowers of every colour, and offering every attraction of form and height.[1] It is, however, as a whole, far from being what we should think a desirable climate. The change to summer is as rapid as that which ushers in the spring. The verdure of the plains perishes in a day. Hot winds from the desert burn up and carry away the shrubs; flights of locusts, darkening the air, destroy the few patches of cultivation, and complete the havoc begun by the heat of the sun, which soon grows almost intolerable. Violent whirlwinds occasionally sweep over the face of the country, and can be seen advancing from the desert, carrying with them clouds of sand and dust. Almost utter darkness prevails during their passage, which lasts, generally, about an hour, and nothing can resist their fury. The Arabs strike their black tents and live during these hot months in sheds of reeds and grass, on the banks of the river: if they can find a spot furnishing the materials for such shelters. The thermometer ranges from 112 to 115, or even 117 degrees; and hot winds sweep, like blasts from a furnace, over the desert during the day, while they drive away sleep by night. Compared with such a home Canaan was a paradise.

In the town itself, the ruins of an ancient stronghold, built of large blocks of basalt, still attest the military importance of the position. Nor was it less favourably placed for commerce. Four roads passed through it from the earliest times: to Assyria, on the east; to Babylon and the Persian Gulf on the south-east; towards Asia Minor on the north, and to Syria on the south-west,[2] and these must have brought Abraham into contact with caravans and

[1] Ritter, *Erdkunde*, vol. xi. p. 292 ff. Chwolson, *Ssabier*, vol. i. p. 303. Malan, *Philosophy or Truth*, p. 87.

[2] Kiepert's Map.

travellers from all parts of the East and West. They were, moreover, the lines along which armies marched in the constant wars of these ages; and hence, Abraham had very likely seen, while still in Haran, the levies of Elam, Larsa, Shinar, and Northern Mesopotamia, with which, under Chedorlaomer, he was to come into hostile contact thirteen years later, in Palestine.

At the foot of the slope which is crowned by the ruins of the fortress, are nestled the beehive-shaped huts of the Bedouin population, who thus, like the inhabitants of the many villages of the open plain, still use dwellings exactly similar to those seen on ancient Assyrian slabs;[1] scarcity, or rather want, of timber, forcing them to adopt this singular style of building. Bare stone walls raised without cement into the shape of a sugar loaf, with a hole at the top for light, have in all ages been characteristic of the neighbourhood. Everywhere in the plain one meets traces of ancient canals of irrigation, by which the waters of the Belik were utilized to spread fertility throughout the year on all sides. But the traveller is especially attracted by the "Wells of Rebecca," where Eliezer met the future wife of Isaac, and where Sarah had certainly often been, long before her. Even now, the flocks of Haran gather round them each morning, and the women still come to them to draw water for the day's use.[2]

The fullest description of this temporary home of Abraham, which became the permanent centre of the eastern branch of his race, is given by Dr. Malan.[3] He approached it from the north, where "the green slopes of the lower

[1] *Nineveh and Babylon*, p. 112.
[2] Malan's *Philosophy or Truth*, p. 373. Vigouroux, vol. i. p. 362.
[3] *Philosophy or Truth*, p. 93.

hills of Armenia " have sunk into a rolling level as the traveller advances from Edessa or Oorfa. "At every step," says he, "on the way to Haran, which now lies as it did of old at about six hours' march from Oorfa, the hills on the right hand and on the left of the plain recede farther and farther, until you find yourself fairly launched on the desert ocean ; a boundless plain, strewed at times with patches of the brightest flowers, at other times with rich and green pastures, covered with flocks of sheep and goats feeding together ; here and there a few camels, and the son or daughter of their owner tending them. One can quite understand that the sons of this open country, the Bedouin, love it, and cannot leave it ; no other soil would suit them. The air is so fresh, the horizon is so far, and man feels so free, that it seems made for those whose life is to roam at pleasure, and who own allegiance to none but themselves. The ruins of the castle surmounting a mound makes Haran a landmark plainly visible from every part of the plain. That same day I walked at even to the well I had passed in the afternoon, coming from Oorfa ; the well of this, the city of Nahor, 'at the time of the evening—the time when women go out to draw water.' There was a group of them filling, no longer their pitchers, since the steps down which Rebekah went to fetch the water are now blocked up—but filling their waterskins, by drawing water at the well's mouth. Everything around that well bears signs of age and of the wear of time ; for, as it is the only well of drinkable water there, it is much resorted to. Other wells are only for watering the flocks. There we find the troughs of various height, for camels, for sheep, and for goats, for kids and for lambs ; there the women wear nose-rings, and bracelets on their arms, some of gold or of silver, and

others of brass, or even of glass. One of these was seen in the distance, bringing to water her flock of fine patriarchal sheep; ere she reached the well, shepherds, more civil than their brethren of Horeb, had filled the troughs with water for her sheep. She was the sheik's daughter, the 'beautiful and well-favoured' Sadheefeh. As the shadows of the grass and of the low shrubs around the well lengthened and grew dim, and the sun sank below the horizon, the women left in small groups; the shepherds followed them, and I was left alone in this vast solitude."

Towards this district—six hundred miles north-west of Ur as the crow flies, and much more by the winding route of the camel track, and of the great river—Terah led his yet undivided tribe while Abraham was still in his early prime; for when he left Haran at the age of seventy-five he had lived in it so long that he spoke of it as "his country," and "the home of his kindred."

The way thither, from the south, brought the patriarch in contact with the chief seats of the civilization of the day. Passing slowly with the long train of loaded camels, and the still slower multitude of his herds and flocks, his tent would be pitched on the third or fourth night thirty miles from Ur,[1] outside the gate of Larsa, the Ellasar of Genesis; with its great temple-tower crowned by the glittering shrine of the Sun-god Shamas.[2] Then would come Erech, the modern Warka, fifteen miles north-west of Larsa, with its huge earthen walls six miles in circumference, and its houses reaching fully three miles beyond them, on the east. High above mansion and palace would be seen the tower-temple

[1] Ur, in Hebrew, means "light," or "flame," and may very possibly have given rise to the legends of Abraham having been condemned to be burned alive.

[2] Shemesh is "Sun" in Hebrew; so nearly were the two languages alike.

of Ishtar, the Venus of Chaldæa; symbolized by the planet of that name, and famous, or rather infamous, for the obscenities associated with her worship.[1] Even yet, the ruins form a hill of a hundred feet high. Sixty miles farther north-west, Calneh, or Nippur, would be reached, in a country interlaced, like all these regions, with countless threads and broader channels of irrigating waters. Here, the patriarch would pass under the shadow of two mighty temple-towers, crowned as usual with the ziggurats of the divinities to whom they were dedicated,—the one, Bel, the great Lord, afterwards known too well in Palestine as Baal, "The light of the gods," "the lofty One," "the Father of the gods," "the Creator," "the Lord of all," symbolized by the shining eastern sun; the other, Beltis, "his consort," "the mother of the gods."[2] Still journeying north-west, sixty-five miles more would bring the wanderers to Borsippa, with its tremendous tower, Birs Nimrud; the great temple of Merodach, patron of Babylon; worshipped under the symbol of the planet Jupiter.[3] Fifteen miles farther on Babel itself would come in sight, with its towers and palaces, and wide gardens, and sea of houses, and lofty encircling walls. All these lay within a hundred and fifty miles of Ur. A few miles more, and the bounds of Chaldæa were passed. Cutha, from which settlers were to be sent long afterwards to re-people the land of Israel, desolate by the captivity, lay fifteen miles north-east. Next came Sippara, "Book-town,"[4]—afterwards Sepharvaim, or "the two

[1] Imprecations on the prostitute of the goddess Ana (Ishtar) who does not render faithfully her shameful service, still remain on the clay tablets. Lenormant, *La Magie*, p. 4.

[2] These names are given to Bel and Beltis in the Assyrian inscriptions. Schrader, p. 80.

[3] Tomkins' *Times of Abraham*, p. 26.

[4] So Hitzig. *Geschichte des Volkes Israel*, p. 80.

Book-towns,"—and "Town of the Sun,"[1] of later history, where, according to legend, the sacred writings were buried, before the Deluge. The great temple of the Sun-god had been built there, in days to which only tradition reached back. Sippara was the seat of the old Semitic supremacy in Chaldæa, though dating from times still earlier. The mounds under which the two halves of Sippara lie buried, have been identified in our day, at an hour's distance from each other on the Euphrates, and strange witnesses of its ancient story have been brought to light. Twenty thousand inscribed tablets from it are now in the British Museum, besides a great number of inscribed stones and terra-cotta cylinders dating from B.C. 3800 to B.C. 300. They are part of the library of the Temple of the Sun-god, and represent every class of literature, sacred and profane, so that Abraham lived amongst a people of cultivated minds and given to reading. Terah had still to travel a hundred miles farther north before he passed beyond the edge of the ancient delta or alluvial plain of the Euphrates, and began to ascend the table-land which marks the first step upwards towards the far distant mountains of Southern Armenia; and he was still nearly four hundred miles from Haran. But from this point the country was as yet thinly peopled, and the flocks and herds might go where they liked, as the pasture invited them. Haran, "the City of the Heathen" of later times, but perhaps originally meaning only "the road," though, possibly, rather "the Scorched" or "Burnt up," was a frontier town of Babylonia, in Abraham's day, and commanded both the routes of travel to the west and the fords of the Euphrates. Lying so far north, it

[1] So on the tablets. See for notices of it, 2 Kings xvii. 24; xviii. 34. Isaiah xxxvi. 19; xxxvii. 13.

would not be reached till after a journey of months from Ur.[1]

Though now in Padan-Aram, "the plains of the highlands," and so far from Chaldæa, Abraham would find the idolatry he had hated in the far south still around him. The old Accadian worship still prevailed and the Semitic gods had also been introduced. Haran had been from early times a chief seat of the worship of the Moon-god Sin, from whose name, very probably, came that of Mount Sinai. The Temple of the Moon in it, rivalled that of Ur in splendour: and its image of the god, which was only a simple cone of stone, surmounted by a figure of the moon, was especially venerated. The planet Mercury,—here known as the god Merodach; possibly a deification of Nimrod,[2]—is recorded on the tablets as "the prince of the men of Haran,"[3] and in the British Museum, a seal cylinder, showing a priest in adoration before his altar, has the inscription "the god of Haran."[4] Even then the priests must have been practised astronomers, for the worship of the planets implies a systematic watching of every phase and object of the heavens. It was a land that might please Terah and Nahor for its pastures, and its temples would offer them the idol sanctuaries in which they chose to worship; but the lofty spirit of Abraham craved something higher.

[1] The distances and position are taken from the map and text of Rawlinson's *Ancient Monarchies*, vol. i. Haran was regarded in Roman times as the centre of local heathenism, as Edessa was of Christianity.

[2] Professor Sayce. *Trans. Soc. Bib. Arch.*, vol. ii. pp. 243 ff.

[3] *Ibid.*, ii. 247; iii. 168.

[4] An inscription in the British Museum (K. 2701) records an omen in favour of King Esarhaddon (B.C. 681), noticed from the top of the moon-temple at Haran. The moon was seen over the cornfields, with two crowns on its head; a double halo. It was taken as meaning that the king, who was aged, should crown his son also, and this was at once done. The planet Mercury, I should add, stood by the side of the moon—and was interpreted as indicating his now crowned son.

Separation from idolatry had become the fixed passion of his soul. Pure amidst prevailing corruption, true to the worship of the One God amidst universal apostasy; his tent, like the ark of Noah, preserved the hopes of the world in a wild ocean of moral and religious degeneracy. It was under such circumstances that the "call" came to him, we know not how, from God, to carry out his father's long-neglected purpose of leaving the Euphrates and passing on to Canaan in the far south-west. He was now seventy-five years old, and Terah apparently had lately died when the mysterious summons was thus divinely sent; but somewhere about two thousand years before Christ[1]—rather more than less—the resolution was finally taken, by which the future religious history of the world was to spring from the movements of a small Arab tribe.

It is necessary, in trying to realize the patriarch's story, to remember that it was as the chief of a tribe that Abraham set out for Canaan. His brother Nahor, and the part of the clan dependent on him, stayed behind in the plains of Haran, to become the father of twelve Arab tribes—the Nahorites[2]—as Abraham was to be that of twelve tribes of Hebrews. But the descendants of Nahor were to wander in Edom, on the Euphrates, and over Mesopotamia; in Bashan, and to the east of Jordan, and in Northern Arabia,[3] almost unknown and wholly insignificant in history, while those of Abraham were to form the People of God, and to give mankind His Incarnate Son, the Saviour of the world. Nor is it unworthy of notice, in connection with their divergent futures, that Abraham's posterity

[1] "Abraham," in Riehm's *Handwörterbuch*, gives the date as B.C. 2146.
[2] Gen. xxii. 20–24.
[3] See table in Bunsen's *Bibel Urkunden*, vol. i. pp. 78, 79.

alone, of all the tribes descended from Terah, abandoned the nomadic for a settled life.

It was, apparently, an age of special restlessness among the Semitic races. From what causes we know not, they were pressing on, one after another, towards the north or west. The Phœnicians had, perhaps long before, migrated from the shores of the Persian Gulf and settled in Palestine; in the islands of the eastern Mediterranean; and on the coasts of the Egyptian delta. Semitic tribes had moved northward from Babylonia to Assyria; the Arameans were ascending the course of the Euphrates and forming colonies on the eastern frontier of Syria; and Terah had resolved on emigrating to Canaan, years ere Abraham actually set out for it.[1] It has even been thought that there are traces of a conquest of Syria and Palestine by Assyria about this time.[2]

It is impossible that such influences should not have affected the tribe of which Abraham was head, as well as others; for the south-west was then, as it continued to be for ages, the El Dorado or Golden Land of the Arab races of Asia and Syria. There Palestine lay, beyond the desert; a very Paradise in comparison with it; with its brooks of water, its fountains and depths springing out of valleys and hills; its wheat and barley, its vines and fig trees and pomegranates; its oil-olive and honey.[3] And still beyond, the valley of the Nile had irresistible attractions, in its rich fertility, to the Arab tribes far and near. Indeed, from the earliest ages some of them had settled in the east of Egypt, where they were known as the Amu or herds-

[1] Rawlinson's *Herodotus*, i. 365. Rawlinson's *Ancient Monarchies*, vol. i. p. 54.
[2] Kenrick's *Phœnicia*, pp. 141, 340*n*.
[3] Deut. viii. 7.

men,[1] and were a constant incitement to other related peoples to enter, if possible, a region so different from the wastes they themselves inhabited.

But though such every-day motives might fill the hearts of Abraham's tribe, in discussing over their tent-fires the desirableness of choosing another country than Haran; a far deeper thought lay in the bosom of their chief. To him, the maintenance among his people of the worship of the One Living and True God, endangered so greatly in Mesopotamia, was doubtless, above all things, the supreme consideration. It urged him with the authority of the "voice of God" Himself, in his soul—"to get out of his country and away from his kindred, sunk as they were in idolatry, and from his father's house, to a land that would be divinely shown him"—obedience carrying with it the grand promise that his posterity would become a great nation, and that he himself, through them, would be a blessing to the whole world. That the "call" and the promise were alike from God, needs no surer proof than the position of the patriarch in the future religious history of the world.

We are indebted to the speech of St. Stephen before his accusers for the disclosure of the fact, that this "call" had already been given to Abraham before he left Ur of the Chaldees;[2] and it is quite possible that it was through his influence that Terah set out from that region, with the intention of passing on to Canaan. But, from whatever cause, he chose to settle permanently at Haran, and left Abraham, finally, to take the momentous step alone. It is not clear from Genesis whether Terah was dead before

[1] Brugsch's *Egypt*, vol. i. p. 7.
[2] Acts vii. 2.

the migration of his son ; but St. Stephen tells us he was ;[1] so that, as Abraham was seventy-five when he left Haran, and Terah two hundred and five at his death, the birth of the patriarch could not have taken place before his father's hundred and thirtieth year. This, however, is not singular, as Abraham's marriage with Keturah is set down in the chronology of our Bibles as taking place in his hundred and forty-third year.[2]

That Abraham set forth at the head of a large body of tribesmen is evident, from his taking with him all his herds, and all the male and female slaves born in his tents, or whom he had bought in Haran ; a multitude so large in the aggregate as to enable him, a few years later, to select from among them, on the moment, three hundred and eighteen men trained to the soldierly defence of the camp, to pursue Chedorlaomer. In fact, though he did not call himself a king, but preferred the simple dignity of a tribal chief, he was always regarded by the Canaanite kings as their equal, and allied himself with them as such.[3] Josephus,[4] quoting from an author now lost,[5] even tells us that "Abraham ruled in Damascus, being a foreigner, who came with an army out of the land above Babylon, called the land of the Chaldæans. But after no long time he departed and moved from that country also, with his people, and went into the land then called Canaan, but now Judæa, he and his numerous posterity." He adds that the name of Abraham was still famous at Damascus, and that a house

[1] Acts vii. 4.

[2] If Terah were dead before Abraham left Haran, the "seventy years" in Gen. xi. 26 must mean that the eldest son was born when Terah was seventy, and the others at long subsequent dates.

[3] Ewald's *Geschichte*, vol. i. p. 441.

[4] *Ant.*, i. 7, 2.

[5] Nicolaus of Damascus.

was still shown as his.[1] That the Jews should not have preserved traditions of Abraham's connection with Damascus doubtless rose from the fact that, apparently in the interval between his death and that of Jacob, that city was taken by the Arameans, or Syrians—from the river Kir, in Armenia—and was thus wholly and permanently rendered a foreign community to the Hebrews. Henceforth, indeed, it was often spoken of by them simply as "Aram."

The journey from Haran would naturally lie along the track leading towards the ford of the Euphrates and the road beyond, used as a caravan route to and from Damascus. Leaving the wells and the sanctuary of his tribe,[2] round which his brother Nahor lingered, and where we still find Laban two generations later, he would cross the great river near where the ancient Apamea once stood, and the modern Birs now stands. Thus far up the course of the stream, the steamer *Tigris*, under Colonel Chesney, was able to ascend in 1836 : a distance of 1,117 miles from the Persian Gulf. The country is rough with hills, the outlying spurs of the great Taurus chain, though pastoral stretches intervene ; but it is not till far to the south that the broad levels of Chaldæa are reached. It took Abraham two days to reach the great stream rolling at his feet beneath high chalk cliffs, in volume and breadth not unlike the Rhone. The ford by which he crossed it, apparently at Zeugma—a little west of Birs—is still in use. Once on the western side, he was finally committed to the journey on which his heart had so long been set. Others had borne before him the name of "Hebrews," for that of "Heber,"[3]

[1] With all this, there is no ground for thinking of Abraham, with Bertheau (*Geschichte*, p. 218), as heading a great migration of vast masses of people.

[2] Ewald, vol. i. p. 415.

[3] Heber, in Luke iii. 35 ; Eber, in Gen. x. 25.

a remote ancestor, is almost the same; but henceforth it was peculiarly applicable to him and his descendants, as those who had "passed over" from the far side of the "Great River."

The old track or road to Damascus stretched on, southwest, to the future site of another Apamea; passing through Beræa, where Julian halted on his last fatal campaign, after two days' laborious march from Antioch; through Chalcis, with its marsh, where salt is still gathered after the heats; then south, through Hamath, the future capital of a Syrian kingdom, conquered by David; and on through Emesa, famous in after-days for its magnificent Temple of the Sun, to Damascus: a distance, in all, of between three hundred and fifty and four hundred miles.[1] He had been only about a hundred and thirty miles from the Mediterranean when he left the banks of the Euphrates,[2] but his journey had run nearly parallel with it, and at Damascus it still lay between fifty and sixty miles to the west.

Dean Stanley has described the circumstances of the journey with a picturesqueness which invites quotation. "All their substance that they had gotten is heaped high on the backs of their kneeling camels. 'The slaves that they had bought in Haran' run along by their sides. Round them are their flocks of sheep and goats, and the asses, moving beneath the towering forms of the camels. The chief is there, amidst the stir of movement, or resting at noon within his black tent, marked out from the rest by his cloak of brilliant scarlet, by the fillet of rope which binds the loose handkerchief round his head, by the spear

[1] Kiepert's Map.

[2] On a line with Oorfa the Mediterranean is distant only eighty-three miles.

which he holds in his hand to guide the march, and to fix the encampment. The chief's wife, the princess[1] of the tribe, is there in her own tent,[2] to make the cakes, and prepare the usual meal of milk and butter;[3] the slave or the child is ready to bring in the red lentile soup for the weary hunter,[4] or to kill the calf for the unexpected guest. Even the ordinary social state is still the same: polygamy, slavery, the exclusiveness of family ties; the period of service for the dowry of a wife; the solemn obligations of hospitality; the temptations, easily followed, into craft and falsehood."[5]

A sketch by Layard of a rich Arab sheik's wife and of his domestic establishment enables us to realize still more vividly the encampment of Abraham and the position and prerogatives of his "princess," Sarah. Her form, we are told, traceable through the thin shirt which she wore, like the Arab women, was well proportioned and graceful. She was tall and fair. Her features were regular, and her eyes large, dark, and brilliant. To the Arabs she was perfection, for all the resources of their art had been exhausted to complete what nature had begun. Her lips were dyed deep blue, her eyebrows were continued in indigo till they united over the nose, her cheeks and forehead were spotted with beauty marks, her eyelashes darkened with kohl; and on her legs and bosom could be seen tattooed ends of flowers and fanciful ornaments, which were carried in festoons and network over her whole body. Hanging from each ear, and reaching to her waist, was an enormous earring of gold, terminating in a tablet of the same material, carved and

[1] Sarah = princess; Sarai = the queenly one. This is the latest etymology. Earlier explanations made Sarai = my princess, or "noble," or even "contentious," "quarrelsome."

[2] Gen. xxiv. 67.

[3] Gen. xviii. 2-8.

[4] Gen. xxv. 34.

[5] Stanley's *Jewish Church*, vol. i. p. 11, 12.

ornamented with four turquoises. Her nose was also adorned with a prodigious gold ring, set with jewels of such ample dimensions that it covered her mouth, and had to be removed when she ate. Ponderous rows of strung beads, Assyrian cylinders, fragments of coral, and particoloured stones hung from her neck; silver rings encircled her wrists and ancles, making a loud jingling as she walked. Over her blue shirt was thrown, when she issued from the tent, a coarse striped cloak, and a common black kerchief was bound loosely round her temples by a rope of twisted camel's hair.

It was her privilege to prepare in her tent the dinners of the sheik's guests. Between the centre poles were placed, upright and close to each other, large goat-hair sacks of rice, corn, barley, coffee, and other household stuff; and upon them were spread carpets and cushions on which she reclined. Around her, squatted on the ground, were some fifty hand-maidens, tending the wide caldrons, baking bread on iron plates, heated over the ashes, or shaking between them the skins suspended from the stakes and filled with milk, to be thus churned into butter. As supplies were asked for by the women, she lifted the corner of her carpet, untied the mouths of the sacks, and distributed their contents. Everything passed through her hands. To show her authority and rank she poured continually on her attendants a torrent of abuse, and honoured them with epithets of which I may be excused attempting to give a translation. Her children—three naked little urchins, black with sun and wind, and adorned with long tails of plaited hair, hanging from the crown of their heads—rolled in the ashes, or on the grass. Her name, like that of Sarai, was "The Queen."

The way from Damascus to Canaan lay, at first, straight from Damascus, across the green valley of the Pharpar, the arid hill country of Geshur, and the richly-wooded, rolling landscapes of Bashan, with their straths of rich pasture, and the flow of clear waters in every bottom, to Edreï, one of the two capitals of Bashan, and, in after-times, the seat of Og, its Amorite king, on the northern edge of the Hauran, or "Burnt Country." Without water, without access except over rocks and through defiles all but impracticable, the strange city fortress would be as novel a sight to Abraham as its ruins, amongst a wilderness of shattered volcanic rocks, seamed with countless fissures, are to the traveller still. Thence his slow-footed camels, and still slower flocks and herds, would turn westward, towards the Jordan, and descend from the uplands, over which they had hitherto advanced, to the ford, seven miles below the Sea of Galilee, and after climbing the steep ascent to the table-land of Palestine, would spread abroad over the "pastures of the wilderness." Much of the country, at this time, has reverted to a state that must closely resemble its open landscapes in the days of the patriarch. Bare generally, in spring the wide pasturage is a carpet of many-coloured flowers. Tracts like the northern edge of the Red Sea, which deserve the name of wilderness or desert in the fullest sense, are unknown in Palestine. Round the wells of Moses, beyond Suez, before going back to the sand drift, the sea border sparkles with crystals of salt and has no herbage beyond a rare bush. But in the pastures towards Beersheba, I rode through a scene of rare beauty, in the glorious spring-time, though it would before long be so scorched by the heat that the flocks would have to be driven to the hills, to hunt up the thin green of the cooler glens. Abraham

would move on with his flocks over an interminable carpet of flowers and grass, with water in every hollow; for we may be sure that he took care to migrate after the spring rains. The ford at which he crossed would in all probability be that opposite the isolated Phœnician colony of Bethshean, in its richly fertile hollow, under Gilboa, but this would soon be left behind. Climbing the ascent of the hills of Samaria, and crossing over and round them, the long and wide procession of flocks and herds would reach Shechem, in the centre of Palestine, the resting-place of the patriarch for the time.

CHAPTER XV.

THE FRIEND OF GOD.

Had Abraham been only the head of an Arab tribe, his name must have perished long ages ago, like that of other men locally great in their day. That it is venerated still by Jew, Mohammedan, and Christian alike, is due to his having given the true religion to mankind, and thus being for ever identified with it.

It is nevertheless unlikely that he was absolutely the only one in Chaldæa who held to the pure faith of earlier ages, in those trying times when idolatry was rapidly spreading and developing; perhaps with fierce bigotry and intolerance. There may have been other Pilgrim Fathers from the Euphrates towards Canaan or Egypt; then, in spite of its moral corruption, so famous for religious wisdom and insight: but if so they have left no trace. In Abraham, however, the almost lost truth shines out again with a splendour that has illuminated all ages since. He stands on the edge of the past, a grand figure; like Abdiel, faithful alone among the faithless; braving all personal danger in defence of his convictions, and leaving behind him home and friends, to wander, at God's command, to unknown lands, that he might find in them that spiritual freedom denied him in his native country.

But his personal character is not alone the ground of his lofty place in the history of religion. His influence on

his household and descendants, in moulding their faith by his own, and thus founding the true kingdom of God amongst men, gives him a world-wide interest. To have rejected Chaldæan and Canaanitish idolatry, and in their place to have adopted a spiritual religion, marks him as second only to One other in the history of mankind. His fidelity in this is, indeed, specially noticed to his honour. "I know him," says the Almighty, "that he will charge his children and his descendants after him, to keep the way of Jehovah and live righteously and justly (by doing so)—and because of this Jehovah will fulfil what he has promised respecting him."[1] Nor was his genuine and lofty fear of God unnoticed or unacknowledged in his own day; for the most powerful and the most religious among the foreign races in whose midst he wandered were forward to own that "God was with him," and on this account eagerly sought his friendship and blessing.[2]

The supreme dignity of being called "The Friend of God," alike in the Old and New Testaments,[3] is only a further and grander embodiment of the same estimate of his character, under the sanction of the Divine Spirit Himself; and it is striking that even outside the Scriptures its justness has been so widely recognized, that in all Mohammedan countries the name "El Khalil Allah," "The Friend of God," or simply "El Khalil," has entirely superseded his own. But this title, so unique, is of far higher than any personal significance. It bears with it all that distinguishes a true religion from a false. Not

[1] Gen. xviii. 19. Translations of Zunz and De Wette. Dillmann explains, "I know him," as equivalent to "I have made a special covenant with him." See Amos iii. 2. Hosea xiii. 5.

[2] Ewald, vol. i. p. 456. See Gen. xiv. 18-20; xxi. 22-32.

[3] 2 Chron. xx. 7. Isa. xli. 8. James ii. 23.

only must God be a Divine Personality to show friendship at all; He must be the One Only God thus to attract to Himself the undivided love and homage of His creatures. He can neither be confounded with the universe, as in Pantheism, nor with idol gods. Still more, it clothes Him with the infinite attractions of a nature which, in loving, can itself be loved, and thus bases religion on its only true footing, the affections and the heart. With the Friend of God, to serve Him is no mere observance of rites or ceremonies; it must be the loyal devotion of the soul and life, transforming man into the spiritual image of Him whom He adores and delights to obey.

Herder's words on Abraham in this connection are characteristic.[1] "Men have sometimes communed with gods, genii, and departed heroes, but not with God, the One God of heaven and earth, in a way so calm and trusting. The stranger has no other friend than He, who had brought him into this remoteness; but Him he possesses as the Friend of friends. What tender passages are there in the intercourse of God with him; how He comforts, directs, cheers him with future hopes; gives him now, the pledge of a covenant, now, the sign of friendship, now, a new name, now, symbols to impress his heart, and demands now this, now that, return of love to Himself."

It was especially as "The Father of the Faithful" that this transcendent honour was vouchsafed him. "Abraham believed in Jehovah, and He counted it to him for righteousness"—believed with a loving trust, for that is the force of the Hebrew word. It means, indeed, not simply that he yielded an intellectual assent, but that he rested on God's word as a house stands immovable on a

[1] *Geist der Ebräischen Poesie* (1827), vol. ii. p. 11.

sure foundation; that he leaned on God as weakness leans on strength; that he reposed in undoubting trust in Him as a child in its mother's arms; that his faith was no intermittent fervour, but abiding, before God, as the stream of a never-failing river.[1] No delay of fulfilment ever made him waver; no difficulties or discouragements ever made him doubt. Nor was it a faith which contented itself with merely passive graces; it coloured his whole life, finding its natural expression in obeying the laws of Jehovah, keeping His charge, His commandments, His statutes, and His laws.[2] To count such a faith as itself righteousness was only to give the same name to the hidden life of the soul and to its outward manifestations.

How hard it must have been to attain such a frame, and to preserve it through life, they can best feel who are most desirous of making it their own. The influence of the universal example of idolatry itself demanded a rare moral courage to surmount; for to dare to be alone is given to very few. And even when he had learned to trust the unseen Father, how terrible were the trials to which that confidence was exposed!

It has been well remarked that, in its application to Abraham, the title of the Father of the Faithful had a breadth of significance instinctively felt far outside the limits of his own race. He was, indeed, the Father of the chosen people, but in a nobler sense he was, also, the Father of all true believers of every age and nation. As such St. Paul adduces his name in support of a plea for the extension of the promises of God to the Gentile as freely as to the Jew; and it is this which makes him the boasted ancestor of the Arab no less than of the Hebrew. "The

[1] Gesenius' *Lexicon*, p. 65. [2] Gen. xxvi. 5.

scene of his life, as of the patriarchs generally, breathes a larger atmosphere than the contracted limits of Palestine—the free air of Mesopotamia and the desert—the neighbourhood of the vast shapes of the Babylonian monarchy on one side, and of Egypt on the other. He is not an ecclesiastic, not an ascetic, not even a learned sage; but a chief, a shepherd, a warrior, full of all the affections and interests of family and household, and wealth and power, and for this very reason the first true type of the religious man, the first representative of the whole Church of God."[1]

No details are given of the creed of Abraham; but, in addition to his confession of the One Only Living God, it must have included all that was true in the popular beliefs of Chaldæa. This would imply his knowledge of the Sabbath; for the seventh day, by a tradition handed down from Eden, was "holy" in his Eastern native land, and was honoured by the cessation of all work on it. He had been accustomed to weekly assemblies for public worship, if only of idols; to religious processions, music, hymns of adoration, and prayer. The burning of incense was familiar to him.[2] Propitiatory sacrifices of rams and of bulls had been so multiplied in Chaldæa that their blood was spoken of as flowing like water. But he had also been familiar with the hideous sight of human sacrifice.[3] A sacred ark dedicated to one of the gods seems to have been known in Babylonia from the earliest times.[4] Some idea of the guilt of sin still remained, and its due punishment was taught in popular legends, if not otherwise. The fall of

[1] Stanley's *Jewish Church*, vol. i. p. 21.
[2] Smith's *Assyr. Discov.*, p. 191.
[3] See page 255.
[4] Smith's *Assyr. Discov.*, p. 175. Lists of the gods appear in the inscriptions.

the angels and of men; the story of the Flood; the belief in the immortality of the soul, in a judgement to come, in a heaven of blessedness, where the holy were robed in white, and enchanting music delighted the senses; in a place of punishment, and perhaps even in the resurrection of the dead, were still articles of the popular creed, and as such must have been shared by Abraham.[1] God Himself was known to him and worshipped as El, or Elohim, a name handed down from the first ages of the world, and long retained in Chaldæa and Phœnicia; the populations of which, as we have seen, had originally a common home on the Persian Gulf. It is striking, however, that with Abraham and in the Bible generally, El is never used alone, but always in such a combination as El Shaddai—the Almighty God; the plural form Elohim being the constant form employed instead. The true explanation of this, as only an idiomatic expression of the highest adoration, has been already given.[2] Some, however, have fancied they see in it a lingering trace of polytheism having changed the original singular into a plural, when gods were multiplied. But, if that be so, Abraham, and Israel in all ages after him, wrested it at once and for ever from such an idolatrous use, and consecrated it so strictly to the doctrine of One God that it never has a plural sense in Scripture when applied to the Divinity; except in rare cases where the gods of the heathen are expressly intended.

Thus it is to Abraham we owe the transmission, not only of the knowledge of many articles of permanent religious faith, and of many of the events of the earliest history of the world, utilized afterwards, under Divine guidance, in

[1] Proofs of the existence of these beliefs among the Accadians are given at p. 256.
[2] See p. 9.

the compilation of the first books of Scripture; but also that greatest of all truths, the Unity, Personality, and Holiness of God.[1]

How Abraham could thus have given to men a doctrine so sublime, and so utterly unknown outside the sphere of revelation,[2] is a question of the highest interest, the answer to which cannot perhaps be better given than in the words of Max Müller, a few lines of which have been already quoted. "How is the fact to be explained," he asks, "that the three greatest religions of the world, in which the unity of the Deity forms the key-note, are of Semitic origin? Mahometanism, no doubt, is a Semitic religion, and its very core is monotheism. But did Mahomet invent monotheism? Did he invent even a new name of God? Not at all. And how is it with Christianity? Did Christ come to preach faith in a new God? Did He or His disciples invent a new name of God? No. Christ came, not to destroy, but to fulfil, and the God whom He preached was the God of Abraham. And who is the God of Jeremiah, of Elijah, and of Moses? We answer again: The God of Abraham. Thus the faith in the One Living God, which seemed to require the admission of a monotheistic instinct, grafted in every member of the Semitic family, is traced back to one man; to him 'in whom all the families of the earth shall be blessed.' And if from our earliest childhood we have looked upon Abraham, the Friend of God, with love and veneration, his venerable figure will assume still more majestic proportions, when we see in him the life-spring of that faith which was to unite

[1] We cannot readily doubt that it is to the patriarch we owe also the tables of descent of races and families; for they, too, sprang from a Chaldæan centre.

[2] Bunsen, *Urkunden*, vol. i. p. 100.

all the nations of the earth, and the author of that blessing which was to come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ. And if we are asked how this one Abraham passed, through the denial of all other gods, to the knowledge of the one God, we are content to answer that *it was by a special divine revelation*, granted to that one man, and handed down by him to Jews, Christians, and Mahometans, to all who believe in the God of Abraham. We want to know more of that man than we do; but even with the little we know of him, he stands before us as a figure, second only to One in the whole history of the world." [1]

That Abraham, the founder of the Hebrew nation and of their religion, should move in their records only as a man among men, marks the infinite contrast between Bible history and all other. There is no cloudy dawn in the annals of the favoured race, no fabulous age of gods or demi-gods, or incredible heroes. Legend, outside Scripture, may attempt to invest their founder with supernatural attributes,[2] but, in the Bible, he is always a man and nothing more.[3] There is no confounding of the Divine and human. God remains absolutely and infinitely self-complete and unapproachable in His essence, and it is only by an act of immeasurable condescension that even the Father of the Faithful is dignified as "His Friend." [4]

Of the outward religious life of Abraham we have only incidental glimpses. Wherever he pitches his tents, an

[1] The *Times*, April 14 and 15, 1860.

[2] See a wonderful collection of such legends in Bayle's *Dictionnaire*, art. Abraham.

[3] He is portrayed, above all, as a pattern of moral excellence. He is not the hero to be honoured for mighty deeds by which he exalted himself to a god or demi-god, as the ancestors of other nations are represented in their traditions. He lives in the heart of the world not as a warrior and conqueror, but as a self-sacrificing man, humbly obedient to God, acting and thinking nobly in all purity and simplicity: Graetz, *Geschichte der Juden*, vol. i. p. 9.

[4] 2 Chron. xx. 7. Isa. xli. 8. James ii. 23.

altar forms the natural sanctuary of the encampment; but it is of the simplest materials—rough stones, or modest turf, and it stands under the open sky. Of any sacrifices offered by him, except after the deliverance of Isaac on Mount Moriah, there is no hint; for the victims slain on the occasion of the great covenant granted him by Jehovah were rather customary rites of such an occasion, than offerings in the common acceptation. But whatever forms prevailed, they were carried out by himself, as at once the father and household priest. Each of his four great halting places in Canaan — Shechem, Bethel, Hebron, and Beersheba—had its altar, no doubt near his tent, which, as that of the sheik of the tribe, would seem to have been usually pitched under the shade of some umbrageous trees, as in the case of the terebinths, or oaks, at Mamre and at Shechem, or of the tamarisks at Beersheba.[1]

The unique position of Abraham in connection with the worship of the true God, and as the father of the chosen people, is marked in his history by such relations to the Almighty as have never before or since been granted to any mere man. Even before his setting out for Canaan, we are told, the pain of leaving his country, and kindred, and his father's house, was softened by gracious communications from above, which stretched the brightness of a great promise, like a rainbow, over the cloud. "I will make of thee,"

[1] The word translated "plain" in the English version—Gen. xii. 6; xiii. 18—should be terebinth, the *Pistacia terebinthus* of botanists, and the turpentine tree of the Greek islands. It is very common in the south and east of Palestine, and is generally found in situations too dry and warm for the oak, which, however, it much resembles at a distance. The word "grove" (Gen. xxi. 33) should be translated "tamarisk tree," for which the soil of Beersheba is well suited. Travellers frequently pitch their tent under the shade of this kind of tree. Its appearance is very graceful, with its long feathering tufts and branches, closely clad with the minutest of leaves, and surmounted in spring with spikes of beautiful pink blossom, which seem to envelop the whole tree in one gauzy sheet of colour.

said the Divine intimation, "a great nation, and I will bless thee and make thy name great, and thou shalt be a blessing. And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee; and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." It is in keeping with the childlike confidence in God by which he was so marked, that the words immediately follow—"So Abram departed, as Jehovah had spoken unto him."[1] A childless man, already seventy-five, it was yet enough for him that he had the word of the Almighty. His faith in the Divine promise gave him an unwavering "confidence in things hoped for," and an abiding "conviction" of the "reality of things not seen;" and it brought its reward. His first encampment of Shechem became, in effect, a formal taking possession for his distant posterity of the land he had entered; for the promise was presently confirmed to him, "Unto thy seed will I give this land." Years passed, while the tents of the tribe were in turn pitched at Bethel, on the banks of the Nile, and at Hebron, but the promise remained unfulfilled. The faith that had so long endured triumphantly was, however, to be rewarded by a special honour, shown to no one before or since. As the great patriarch rested in his tent under the terebinths of Mamre, at Hebron, "the word of the Lord came" to him "in a vision," saying, "Fear not, Abram, I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." Undoubting, but sorely perplexed, the long-tried man feels as if any bounty shown him can be of little good, old as he is, and ere long to die childless; with only his head slave, Eliezer of Damascus, as his heir. The custom thus indicated is of immemorial antiquity in the East, and still prevails among the Mohammedans of India. In default of

[1] Gen. xii. 2-4.

children, or where there are only female descendants, the father of a household adopts a slave as his heir and marries him to one of his daughters; to keep the property together.[1] Even in Scripture, indeed, we find the same practice, as in the case of the mighty Jarha, mentioned in the book of Chronicles.[2]

But the future was richer for the patriarch than he dreamed; for, presently, he seemed, in the vision, to be led outside his tent, and told to look up at the countless stars, glittering in the brightness of a Syrian sky—those stars worshipped in his native land as radiant gods, but now to be regarded only as glories of the Creator's power. As he did so the words fell on his ear, "like these, innumerable, shall be thy descendants." "A child of thine own shall be thy heir." Ten years had passed since the promise of the land had been given; now it was added that the inheritance should be direct, in his own posterity. It was hard to credit it, at his age, and in his circumstances; but the triumph of his unwavering confidence in God is recorded in the words, "he believed in Jehovah, and He counted it to him for righteousness." His childlike trust was reckoned as a fulfilment of the Divine law of obedience and love.

This loyal faith, which had hitherto found its all-sufficing support in the word of Him who cannot lie, was now, in His infinite condescension, to have the outward assurance

[1] Forbes' *Oriental Memoirs*. "Go" (Gen. xv. 2) = go hence = die. Luther rightly, "Ich gehe dahin."

[2] 1 Chron. ii. 34. In Abraham's case Eliezer had been born in his master's tents, and was thus dearer to him than a slave bought from without. The notice of Abraham's chief slave has an allusion to Damascus, which is retained in the Greek Bible. This "son of Meshek," runs the Hebrew—that is, "this, my heir presumptive," is "Damesek," or Damascus "Eliezer." "Son of Meshek" means "the son of his inheritance or property." The Septuagint reads, "I am departing (this life) without a child, but the son of Masek, my home-born female slave—this Eliezer of Damascus (born there) is my heir."

of a human form of covenant, to which future ages might permanently appeal. In Abraham's native Chaldæa solemn agreements or treaties were confirmed by rites which still continued in use from his day to the fourth century after Christ ;[1] and these were to be observed as between God and the patriarch, that he and his descendants might have a memorial of the gracious promise of the Almighty to them. The incident seems to have marked the day after the vision.[2] A young heifer, a she-goat, and a ram, each of three years old, were wont to be divided in the ceremony of human engagement between contracting parties, and the pieces set far enough apart to let these pass between them : as if to call down on themselves the fate of the victims, if they broke the covenant thus ratified. In Abraham's case a turtle dove and a young pigeon were added, apparently as an offering. Each circumstance usual in human covenants was rigidly observed, even to the age of the creatures slain ; for three was apparently the sacred number constantly used in pledges, oaths, and treaties.[3]

The divided pieces duly set at sufficient distances apart ; Abraham, watchful and steadfast, stayed near to guard them, and await the end. Ere long, when the sun began to set, birds of prey, of evil omen, swooped down at the carcasses, but only to be driven off.

Presently, as the short twilight of the East was giving place to night, the patriarch sank into a deep sleep—the common medium of Divine visions. "And, lo, a horror of

[1] Von Böhlen's *Genesis*, p. 180. A burning lamp or fire is still used in India, in ratification of a covenant. A person promising anything, if doubted, points to the flame of a lamp, adding, "that is my witness." At other times, the parties to a covenant confirm it by saying, "We invoke the lamp of the Temple." Roberts' *Illustrations*.

[2] Delitzsch and Ewald.

[3] Ewald's *Alter.*, p. 177. Dillmann's *Genesis*, pp. 172, 260.

great darkness" seemed in his sleep to fall on him; and he heard words disclosing future sufferings to be borne by his posterity; of which the birds of bad omen and this gloom had been the fitting precursors. But, now, its blackness is strangely broken, for between the pieces of the victims are seen passing "a smoking furnace and a burning lamp"[1]—the symbols of the presence of the Almighty—and, in keeping with the brightness, the sacred words of a covenant are heard, in which the whole land is formally given to Abraham, from the river of Egypt—that is, the torrent El Arish,[2] on the south of Philistia—to the great river, the river Euphrates, which actually became the boundary of the Hebrew empire under David.[3] The gift was from God, and He alone was making the promise, so that the symbols of His sanction only were seen; and thus was confirmed, by a sacred pledge, this wondrous covenant between God and man.

In establishing the kingdom of God amongst men it was still, however, necessary that its members should have some

[1] The word "furnace" is Tannur a large round pot of earthen or other materials, two or three feet high, narrowing towards the top. It is used for an oven by being heated within; the dough is then spread on its glowing sides, where it presently forms thin cakes. See Illustration, p. 466. The Tannur is still used in the East.

The word "lamp" is Lappid = Greek, Lampas, a lamp or torch. In Exod. xx. 18, it is translated "lightnings." See, also, Judg. iv. 4.

[2] The Wady el Arish. There is now a village on the side of the torrent bed, about a quarter of a mile from the sea: the houses being mere clay huts. Close to the shore there are remains of some ancient dwellings. The wady is, at times, filled with a rushing stream, after heavy rains. It is the natural boundary of Egypt, and lay on a road provided with numerous cisterns and wells, round which, in some cases, towns rose, ruins of which are still to be seen. The name "El Arish" means "a boundary." The wady runs back into the country, in all, for a hundred miles, ending in a broad barren plain, without trees: the ground broken into gullies by watercourses. It receives the drainage of the two great valleys, or wadys, of the south desert of Palestine—the Tih—and bears it on, when the rainfall is sufficient, to the Mediterranean. An Egyptian fortress stood at the head of it, in ancient times, Palestine was, indeed, in Abraham's day, virtually an Egyptian province, with Egyptian garrisons in its towns, one may suppose, in not a few cases.

[3] 1 Kings iv. 21; viii. 65.

mark to distinguish and separate them from the idolatrous people around; and for this purpose the rite of circumcision was adopted. It had been practised before, by various races, but henceforth it was to become the special badge of the chosen people. The Chaldæans, Abraham's own people, knew nothing of it, nor did the tribes of Palestine; except perhaps the Phœnicians;[1] but the Egyptians had practised it from immemorial antiquity.[2] It is, however, indifferent, whether this be so or not, for its introduction among the Hebrews had a special and independent significance; and. in any case. it stands only in the same relation to Divine truth as the use of sacrifice, which obtained before Moses; or of baptism, which was practised before Christ gave it the dignity of a sacrament. To Abraham and his posterity circumcision was an abiding sign of consecration to God, and of admission into the congregation of Jehovah. The nations around had their distinctive forms of dedication to their idols, in the fanciful trimming of their beards and hair, forbidden so strictly to the Jews,[3] and in the tattooing the sign of a god on the brow, the arm, or the hand,[4] as is still common in the East. But circumcision was much more than this, for it presented the child or the man as an offering to God—a part of the body standing for the whole—and tacitly owned that even life was rightfully His, though redeemed by so slight and typical a substitution.[5] And while in later ages a mark of division

[1] Josephus, *Ant.*, viii. 10, 3. His seemingly contradictory testimony is cleared up by passages in Herodotus. Yet in Ezekiel's time they do not seem to have been circumcised, unless the language of Ezek. xxxii. 30 means by uncircumcised, simply heathen, that is, "unclean."

[2] Ebers' *Ægypten und die Bücher Moses'*, pp. 280, 281.

[3] Lev. xix. 27.

[4] Isa. xliv. 5. "Subscribe with his hand unto the Lord," should be, "Writes on his hand the name or sign of Jehovah."

[5] Ewald's *Alter.*, p. 124.

and narrowness, in the tents of the early Hebrews it was only a much-needed and abiding badge of separation from the degenerate races amidst which they lived, and of consecration to Jehovah.[1]

The institution of this rite marks the formal establishment of the true religion among the posterity of Abraham, and was thus the first step in that gracious plan, which culminated in the life and death of our Divine Saviour. Henceforward, Abraham and his tribe bore in their persons a pledge of loyalty to God, and of a life worthy of Him. To mark the great occasion, the promise of the birth of a son within a year—the child of Sarah—accompanied the institution; and the name Abraham, the "Father of a multitude (of nations)," was substituted for Abram, the "exalted Father" or tribal head, while that of Sarah, "the queen," took the place of Sarai, "the princely." Abraham, now ninety years old, had lived for twenty-three years among the corrupt and idolatrous tribes of Canaan. Henceforth, through this self-revelation of God, the contrast between Him and the vain gods around rose in his soul to its full greatness and immeasurable significance. From this

[1] Wilkinson has found proof of the practice of circumcision in Egypt as early as the Fourth Dynasty, that is, long before Abraham (vol. v. p. 318). There is also an instructive painting of the time of the Oppression of the Jews in Egypt, showing the mode of performing the rite. It is described by Chabas, *Revue Archaeologique* (1861), pp. 298 ff. Nearly all mummies, moreover, are circumcised. Ebers, p. 233. The Jews circumcise on the eighth day: the Mohammedans, properly in the thirteenth year, as the time when Ishmael was circumcised. The rite has been found widely practised where it might have been least expected — among the negroes of the Congo and many African tribes, including the Caffres; and also in the Fiji Islands; among the Indians of Central America, the ancient Mexicans, and other Indian races. Curiously, *The Speaker's Commentary*, vol. i. p. 122, and *Land and the Book*, p. 590, not knowing the evidence of the Egyptian monuments, suppose that the priests of Pharaoh learned about circumcision from Joseph. The remark of Michaelis is acute, that if Abraham had not already known about it, more minute directions would have been given him. *Mos. Recht*, vol. iv. p. 185. Ebers (p. 233) says, that, in Egypt, as among the Hebrews, "uncircumcised" was equal to "unclean;" "circumcised," to "clean," or "pure."

time he recognizes and worships God as El Shaddai, the God who has and exercises all power; and holds himself and his race as for ever separated from every god but Him. His relation towards Him is henceforth closer and nobler than that of other men, for he holds from Him a covenant, divinely sealed, constituting him and his posterity the People of God. Already, in the days of Moses, circumcision is assumed as an established rite, long prevalent the badge of Israel as the chosen race.

CHAPTER XVI.

PALESTINE AND EGYPT IN ABRAHAM'S DAY.

The land to which Abraham had been divinely led was one in keeping with the great purpose of God: that to his descendants should be committed, pre-eminently, the religious education of the world. Lying in the centre of the then known world; in close contact at once with Europe, Asia, and Africa; spiritual influences would radiate from it to a wider circumference than was possible from any other country. Its wide variety of climate, moreover, embracing every gradation between that of temperate regions, in the district of Lebanon, and that of the sub-tropical, in the valley of the Jordan; secured that the revelation which was to go forth from it to the whole world, would embody a range of natural experiences which would fit it for all countries and populations; for its imagery and modes of thought must necessarily be coloured by its composition in a land which was, in effect, an epitome of the habitable world.

Moreover, its delightful brightness, and the fruitfulness of some parts of it, which did not require the toilsome cultivation necessary in lands like Egypt; and its nearness to countries from whose resources it could easily procure what it did not itself yield, were fitted to raise its people almost at once above the need of a struggle for their primary wants; and thus to give freedom and leisure for higher

thoughts. Nor could the fact that Canaan was only a narrow strip of coast, hemmed in on one side by the terrible desert and on the other by the boundless ocean, be without influence on the religious life, in the vivid contrasts it offered of abundance and want, and of life and death.

Both Palestine and Egypt appear, in the earliest glimpses we have of them, as lands already occupied by a settled population, with towns and governments. An Egyptian speaks, even before Abraham's day, of its cornfields, figs, vineyards, and fortresses;[1] and it is noted in Genesis that Hebron was built seven years before Zoan, or Tanis, in Egypt; an Asiatic settlement which carried to the valley of the Nile the worship of Baal, the chief god of Western Asia.[2] An Egyptian of a later date, but still earlier than the patriarch, speaks of it as "abounding in wine more than in water," of the plentifulness of its honey, and of its palms; adding that all its trees were fruit-bearing, and that it yielded barley and wheat, and had no end of cattle.[3] As to its olives, they were so abundant that one district had an olive tree for its hieroglyphic sign.

But amidst all this early civilization there had already spread a profound moral corruption. Human sacrifice marked the worship of the gods, and unnatural sins received their name from Sodom, one of the Canaanite towns; nor was it possible that any population which might settle in their midst could escape being more or less affected by these baneful influences.

Yet, withal, the natural phenomena of the country seemed to provide special Divine warnings to rouse its

1 Chabas, *Études*, pp. 106–114. Brugsch's *History of Egypt*, vol. i. p. 100. *Les Pap. Hiératiques de Berlin* (Chabas), pp. 79, 85.

2 *Trans. Soc. Bib. Arch.*, vol. iii. p. 113.

3 *Story of Saneha*; *Records of the Past*, vol. vi. p. 139. Maspero, pp. 108–110.

people from evil and urge them to a nobler life. Earthquakes of great violence were not unknown ; for the cities of the plain perished by one, and Amos records another in the days of King Uzziah.[1] Violent floods not unfrequently wasted its valleys.[2] Terrible storms and burning winds from the desert swept over it at times ; seasons of drought brought after them famine ; and visitations of grasshoppers and other insect plagues were only too frequent.[3] Swift death came with the plague,[4] and hateful diseases, like leprosy, clung to numbers through life, while property and even existence were constantly exposed to the sudden inroads of enemies ; for Palestine was at all times coveted by the nations round it. In the hand of God such judgements might well rouse His people to watchfulness, and, indeed, often won them back to a higher life, when urged by the voice of their prophets.

When we remember how large a space the smallest oasis, or even a well, occupies in Arab chronicles, as the scene of vehement and bloody disputes for its possession, it may be readily conceived how eager the struggle must have been, from the earliest times, for a land which seemed the paradise of the world to the dwellers in the waste and thirsty regions to the east and south of it. Hence, from the first, we can find Canaan peopled by many races, each tenaciously holding its district, however small, and refusing to lose its individuality amidst the new waves of population pressing in from time to time. What the Caucasus was to the Aryan races, Palestine was to the Semitic ; in both, a crowd of tribes, independent of each other, thronged to take possession of the tempting valleys. In the days of

[1] Amos i. 1. Tiberias was almost destroyed by an earthquake in 1837.
[2] Judg. v. 21. Amos viii. 8. [3] Joel i. and ii. [4] Amos iv. 10.

Abraham, however, there was still much open space for pasture between the bounds of the various peoples.

Of the original inhabitants of the Holy Land it is difficult to speak with confidence, but they seem to have survived in Abraham's time and still later, in the Horites or Cave-dwellers, who, latterly, were found chiefly in Mount Seir, though even at this day, districts in the south are found in which caves are the common homes of the population. That their use was general in Palestine in early ages is seen in such a name as Bethhoron—the house of the Cave; and, indeed, even now such dwellings abound among the Syrian peasantry and the poor Turks of Asia Minor. So common, in fact, was the usage in primeval times, throughout Western Asia, that the sign for a home and for a cave is the same in Accadian. The races then surviving were, no doubt, descendants of the prehistoric Cave-men, whose flint tools and other remains are found so widely in Palestine and most other countries. It may perhaps be of them that Job speaks, ages later, as driven from their possessions into the most barren parts of Mount Seir, by invaders, and maintaining their lives only in the utmost misery; though still fierce, when opportunity offered, against their conquerors.[1]

Part of the country on both sides of the Jordan was held by a race of men, known variously as the Rephaim,[2] the

[1] Job xxiv. 5-8; xxx. 1-10. It would be a parallel case to that of the Bushmen, driven into the African desert and mountain caves by stronger races; or of the Eskimo and the Terra del Fuegians, driven into the terrible extremes of the north and south, respectively.

[2] A valley at Jerusalem bore the name of the Valley of Rephaim, or of "the giants," till the days of Joshua, or even much later. (Josh. xviii. 16; Isa. xvii. 5.) These Rephaim were also called Nephilim, which may mean "men of higher than common birth." (Ochler, in *Herzog*, xxi. p. 417.) In Genesis vi., the word translated giants, is "Nephilim," and hence Jewish expositors, in some cases have fancied that the Rephaim were descendants of those who sought to "fight against heaven," the name being in this case explained as meaning "overthrown."

Emim, the Zamzummim, the Sons of Anak, and the Amorites. Their name shows them to have been "mountaineers," and their habit of building their towns on the top of the hills, for security, led the Hebrew spies to speak of these as "walled up to heaven." The prophet Amos describes them as a race of great stature, tall as cedars, and strong as oaks—poetical language which seems to connect them with the gigantic races of the Rephaim and Sons of Anak, a name which means "the wearer of a neck chain," or "the long necked." We find them living in Abraham's time, in the south of Palestine at Hazezon Tamar—"the rows of palms"—and at Hebron, but they also held part of central Palestine. In the time of Moses they appear on the hills of Ephraim as far north as the "scorpion steps," on the borders of Samaria, a slow stair-like ascent on the edges of limestone layers, outcropping like steps, from the top of which I saw, for the first time, the snowy summits of Lebanon flashing afar, in the upper heaven. They were, in those days, found also as far south as Selah or Petra, and the southern downs, while in the districts east of the Jordan they had founded two strong kingdoms, ruled by Sihon and Og, reaching from the torrent Arnon to the north of Bashan. Part of them, known as the Jebusites, held Jerusalem till the daring of Joab wrested it from them for David—their nationality explaining the words of Ezekiel respecting the city, that its father was an Amorite and its mother a Hittite. The hills of Ephraim, moreover, which were long their chief seat, still retain the name of Amarin, among the fellâhin. Two of their fortified towns, Debir and Kadesh, are yet to be seen on Egyptian monuments. The former is apparently the same as Kiriath Sepher, or Book-town, a proof in its name of an advanced civilization.

The latter, mentioned in the invasion of Chedorlaomer in Abraham's day, is represented as built on a hillside, with a stream at the foot, and embosomed in trees, showing a very different condition of the far south of Palestine in that age from its present characteristics. East of the Jordan their chief city was Ashteroth Karnaim, the "city of the two-horned Ashteroth,"—the crested moon which was worshipped under the form of this goddess or of Astarte, the Ishtar of Assyria, to whom the moon and the planet Venus were sacred. Little, however, is known of their religion, but it was evidently borrowed, in part, at least, from that of Mesopotamia, and was very different from that of the patriarchs.[1] It seems, indeed, to have been much the same as that of the Phœnicians. It is curious to find that the word Senir, given to Hermon, the grandest peak of Lebanon, is an Amorite word. Nor are we without some glimpses of even the personal appearance of this ancient race. The Egyptian monuments represent them as wearing a long close robe with short sleeves, bound round the waist by a girdle; their hair darkened by exposure but elaborately dressed and worn long, sometimes with an ornamented fillet round the head; and with flowing reddish beards, which contrasted strongly with a tawny complexion and blue eyes.

In war they used strong chariots, but, like ourselves in the middle ages, their chief arm was the bow; an oblong shield defended the archer from the weapons of the enemy. Moreover, in the picture of the assault of Dapur or Debir, by Rameses II., a shield, pierced with three arrows, and surmounted by a fourth, tied across the top of a flagstaff, glitters over the highest towers of the citadel as their national standard.[2]

1 Josh. xxiv. 15.

2 Wilkinson's *Ancient Egyptians*, vol. i. p. 309.

The Amalekites, apparently an Arab race, lived chiefly in the extreme south, where only the pasturage of wandering flocks, by tent-using tribes, was possible. They seem, before Abraham's time, to have been one of the strongest and most warlike peoples of north-west Arabia, and had doubtless often invaded Palestine from the south and sought to make it their own. They first come before us as holding the whole district from the south of Canaan to Egypt, and also as seated on what were later the hills of Ephraim, which then bore their name. They appear, however, to have been early driven into the desert, but they never forgot that they had once been owners of part of the much-coveted land of hills and valleys, and constantly sought to regain their old footing. It was doubtless the fond clinging to the hope of some day making Canaan, or at least part of it, their own again, that caused their fierce Bedouin attacks on Israel on its way from Egypt, cutting off the weary and the stragglers, and harassing the march. In the Hebrews they saw only rival competitors for a great prize, and strove hard to keep them from it; but drew down on themselves, instead, a terrible curse. "I swear," said Moses, "with hand uplifted to the throne of Jehovah, that He proclaims war in Amalek from generation to generation."[1] How this was fulfilled will be seen hereafter; age after age the Hebrews hated and sought to destroy them, till the last known representative of the race, Haman, "the Agagite," that is, "of the royal Amalekite family," was hanged through the influence of Esther, the Jewess, at the court of the king of Persia.

These various races had at one time occupied, more or less wholly, the wide regions beyond the Jordan as far as

[1] Exod. xvii. 16. I give Ewald's translation.

the Euphrates, and southward to the Red Sea. The few names connected with them, which still survive, are apparently Semitic; and the fact that the chiefs, when overcome by Israel in later times, found a refuge among the Philistines,[1] themselves a branch of the Semitic race, apparently from the colonies which early settled in the eastern islands of the Mediterranean, seems to confirm the belief that the primitive population of Palestine was of that great stock.

The Hittites were a great race in Syria and Palestine, in these early ages. The name is applied, in the Assyrian inscriptions, to all the "west peoples" of Syria, as far as the sea-coast; for the Hittite empire extended from the Euphrates to the west of Asia Minor. In the same way, the Egyptians knew Syria as the land of the Kheta or Khatti. In the time of Rameses II., the Oppressor of Israel in Egypt, they were so strong that a single prince of one portion of their Syrian dominions furnished a contingent of eighteen thousand troops in the defence against Rameses II., whose triumph over the united forces of the race, reckoned his greatest achievement, is celebrated in lofty verse on no less than six different monuments and temples. The Hittites settled in Palestine in the days of Abraham seem, however, to have been very limited in numbers, and peacefully mixing with other races in Hebron and near it. In the time of Moses they are found with the Amorites and Jebusites in the hill-country of Ephraim and Judah, while under Solomon they were compelled to do forced labour on the public works. Even so late as the times of Ezra, indeed, we find the Jews blamed for their connection with them. In Genesis they appear as dwellers in the valleys, in contrast to the

[1] Josh. ii. 22. 2 Sam. xxi. 16–22.

mountaineer Amorites, from whom they differed radically in their occupations and modes of life; while striving as far as possible to maintain their independence. Fond of peace, living in settled communities; acting through popular assemblies; they were marked by a gentle civilization. It was with the Amorites that Abraham allied himself for war; but when he wished to secure possession of property he turned to the sons of Heth. This great race appears to have belonged to the Mongol division of mankind, if we may judge from the details of their dress and looks supplied by the Egyptian monuments. In these they are represented as wearing long pig-tails like the Chinese, and boots turned up at the toes like those of the Turcomans, while, like a Mongol race, they are strangely deficient in beards and whiskers. Their complexion, moreover, is painted as lighter than that of the Semitic tribes.

The Perizzites, a name meaning, like that of the Hittites, "dwellers in the open country," were a peaceful race: preferring quiet villages to fortresses, and living in the fertile tracts of central Palestine,—the graziers, farmers, and peasants of the time, though only few, apparently, in numbers. Like them, the Hivites, another clan, were little inclined to war, but sought a modest, industrious life in the central district, where Gibeon was one of their chief towns; a people preferring, like the Phœnicians, to submit at once to any invader, and thus secure their commercial interests, rather than endanger them by fighting for independence.[1] They appear in the days of the Patriarchs, at Shechem, and survived the doom pronounced

[1] The case of the Gibeonites with Joshua is an instance. It is to be noted that the elders and citizens of Gibeon decide the course taken, nor is any king of Gibeon mentioned in the list of cities and kings in Joshua xii. 9–24. Every form of government seems to have had its representative among the Canaanite tribes.

against them when the land was conquered by Israel. The Gibeonites, who by their craft saved their lives, though made slaves for the service of the Tabernacle, were of this tribe. It is curious to notice that this incident reveals the existence of a republican form of government, by elders, at Gibeon, while the Hivites of Shechem appear as a free community under a prince: generous political ideas which seem to justify the usual derivation of the name of the tribe as meaning "the community."[1] Nor were they confined to Palestine proper, for we find them on the southern slopes of Lebanon, and even as far north as Hamath on the Orontes. But they had sunk in Solomon's time to a feeble remnant, toiling, like the other remnants of their countrymen, in forced labour, at the public works of the haughty Sultan. From his reign their name is not mentioned.[2]

The name Canaan was especially given, apparently by the Phœnicians themselves, to the narrow sea-coast plain at the foot of Lebanon, on which they built Sidon, their earliest town, and perhaps, also, to the plain of Esdraelon and the level shore-line stretching south, towards Egypt. In the time of Moses and Joshua, however, it included the whole country west of the Jordan, which was its permanent limit. In Abraham's day, besides their settlements on the coast plain, they held the rich sunken oases of the Jordan from Bethshean, just below Gilboa and not far from the Lake of Galilee, to the broad expanse above the Dead Sea, with its wealthy cities, Sodom and Gomorrah. Shechem and Hebron, likewise, are thought by some to have been theirs. But their special seat was on the lowlands bordering the Mediterranean, where they had been settled no one

[1] Ewald's *Geschichte*, vol. i. p. 341.

[2] Judg. iii. 3. 1 Kings ix. 20-21.

knows how long. The keenest business people of antiquity, their name, which originally meant a "lowlander," came gradually to be synonymous with a "trader;" while their famous cities of Sidon and Tyre were the seats of a wondrous commercial activity and energy. Even in Abraham's day the chimneys of their great glass-works and dyeing factories may have caught the eye from the inland hills, as they did in the days of Christ; and their vast harbours crowded with sea-going ships, and lined with huge warehouses, may even in the days of the patriarch have been the glory of the land. Everywhere, either as masters of the sea and famous mariners, or as founders of prosperous colonies in the Mediterranean islands, on the coast of the Egyptian delta, and even in distant regions, their energy and prominence were destined in later ages to make their name an equivalent for the inhabitants of the country generally. The word Phœnician means originally brown, or dark red, and rose from the colour of the race, but among themselves they bore the name of Canaanites, of which their Carthaginian brethren still boasted in the days of Augustine.

The grouping of the Phœnicians, in Genesis, with the Egyptians, and the assignment of both to the stock of Ham, though the Phœnician language was almost identical with the Hebrew, and would thus rank them among Semitic peoples—arises from the fact that the division of nations in the Scripture table is founded on their geographical relations; not on scientific correspondence or difference of speech. It rightly assigns to the various races descended from Japheth—"the white"—what was then known of the north of the world; to the descendants of Shem, "the olive-coloured," the central zone; and to those of Ham, "the burnt black," the wide regions of the extreme

south. In remote age, moreover, the boundaries of separate languages would be indeterminate, and, indeed, at this day language is no certain indication of race, for English has replaced Celtic speech in Cornwall, and it is dying out before it in Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, while German has replaced it on the Danube and the Main ; and languages derived from Latin are spoken in Bucharest and Mexico, Brussels and Palermo ; Aryan languages being spoken in Stockholm and Bombay, Dublin and Teheran, Moscow and Lisbon, though it can hardly be said, in any case, that there is more than an infinitesimal community of blood, and even that is entirely wanting in some. But the idea that Hamite races in some instances spoke Semitic languages when the Scripture table was compiled is not needed when we remember that the nations are grouped geographically rather than by speech. The non-Semitic Elamites are, hence, classed with the Semitic Assyrians, and the Phœnicians, who spoke Hebrew, with the Egyptians, from their being alike, settled on the Nile and its Delta, and both coming at one time from the south, though both were of Asiatic and not of African origin.

The original home of the Phœnicians has been fancied by some to have been the "Land of Punt," or the Somali coast. From this, one portion of them, at least, are supposed to have advanced, by the Red Sea, to the Mediterranean, spreading thence to the Syrian coast and over the Levant. But another portion are first met on their slow progress from Southern Arabia to what are now called the Bahrein Islands in the Persian Gulf. The temples, still standing on these islands in Roman times, were evidently Phœnician, and the inhabitants claimed to be the original stock of the famous race of Palestine. Their next resting

place, still pressing north, was on the flat shores of the Persian Gulf, at the mouth of the Euphrates, called by them originally Canaan, or, as they pronounced it, Chna, the "low-lying;" the name afterwards transferred by them to their home at the foot of Lebanon. The Himyarites, a kindred Arab people, with a language akin to theirs and to the Hebrew, and known like them, from their complexion, as the "red," remained behind in South Arabia. But the "Canaanites" chose to migrate to the coast of Palestine, whence they spread to Egypt, among other places; remaining for centuries at the mouths of the Nile, till Egyptian arts, inventions, modes of thought, and religious ideas became common to both races, and re-acted on Sidon and Tyre.

The Philistines, of whom we first read in the time of Abraham, were Phœnicians who had spread northwards from the border of the Nile Delta, we know not how early. Their ancestors had settled in that region either from Phœnicia itself or by migration from the south, or from settlements in Crete—whence they got the name of Crethi—before the native Egyptians had reached the Mediterranean; and as Keft was the name given by the Nile people to Phœnicia, the district of the Delta held by these Phœnicians—afterwards known as Philistines—was called Kaft-ur, "the greater Kaft," or "Phœnicia," the Caphtor of Genesis. On the Mediterranean, which their settlements fringed, the fisheries forthwith opened a new branch of industry to a people with an instinctive genius for commerce. The salt of the country east of the Nile mouths and of Libya, enabled them to begin fish-salting factories, like their brethren at Sidon, in the north. Settlements on the coast before long spread inland. The Nile branches were then

choked with the papyrus and other water plants which have now retreated to the south of Nubia. Huge crocodiles, hippopotami, and other great beasts abounded, and the reeds gave shelter to immense flocks of birds of many kinds. But the Egyptians from the south, and the Phœnicians from the north, clearing their way, like the pioneers of to-day in the American bush, ere long met, and then began the familiar intercourse, to which, in the end, we owe the greatest gift of antiquity—our alphabet, the idea of which these Phœnicians borrowed from the Egyptians, though its expression in a few simple characters was a development due to their own practical turn.

The advance of the Egyptian branch of this restlessly energetic race, towards Palestine, was the result of their intercourse with the district stretching along the coast, from the Nile to the south borders of the Holy Land. Here lay, to the west of the "River of Egypt,"—now Wady el Arish—and of the Serbonian bogs and Mount Casios,—a dry region, efflorescent with salt, which poisoned the soil and left only isolated spots fit for culture. The salt, however, was an important article of commerce; for, the Phœnicians in the north, and in the Delta, were the great fish-salters of antiquity; and though the Egyptians abhorred sea-fish as unclean, and salt itself, Africa, as a whole, must have needed it in great quantities, and it could be readily transported in every direction, since the great road between Asia and Africa ran through the midst of the salt-producing district. The name Casluhim was, indeed, given the people from Mount Casios, in their territory; the Kaslokh, or "dry," "burnt-up hill" of the ancient Egyptians. They seem to have been of Phœnician origin, but had become thoroughly Egyptian in their thoughts and ways.

The history of the Philistines shows them to have been at once warlike and given to commerce, for they were the first who checked the career of Hebrew conquest in the days of Joshua. But if in this they were very different from their unwarlike brethren, the Phœnicians, they resembled them in concentrating their strength in cities on the coast, which they not only fortified, but made the seats of a wide transmarine commerce. Thus, Askalon had a great trade with Cyprus, and boasted of the richest and oldest temple of Venus, the goddess of that island, in any foreign territory. Indeed, the wealth and power of the Philistine cities imply a trade which must have almost rivalled that of Tyre and Sidon, and may perhaps have been largely due to Phœnician settlers from the north. The Avites whom they subdued doubtless continued to till the fields for their new masters as they had before for themselves ; and we know that the remnants of some of the conquered Canaanite tribes, the Rephaim among others, found a home in their territory and helped them in their wars.[1]

Among these various races, scattered in small communities over the land, Abraham at the head of a tribe, numbering in all, perhaps, several thousands, pitched his tents, on entering Canaan. His immense flocks must have had ample room for pasture without invading the rights of his neighbours, else one so peaceful and just would have chosen other camping grounds. But, in those days, even two such powerful sheiks as himself and Lot, could set up their tents in a spot so central and attractive as the plain of Shechem, without encroaching on any one. There, under the grate-

[1] The Philistines to the last were especially warlike, for David had a body-guard from among them. The Cherethites and the Pelethites of 2 Sam. xx. 7 are regarded generally as having been Philistines, though the Targum translates the words "archers and slingers."

ful shade of the Oak of Moreh,[1] in the midst of a wide valley, green with grass, grey with olives, dotted with gardens, and musical with rushing springs; between Mount Ebal on one side, Mount Gerizim on the other, and the sloping heights which rise to form the watershed of central Palestine on the west,[2] he remained till fresh pastures were needed. Then, leaving the simple altar he had built to Jehovah, as a sacred remembrance of his stay, he and his people moved southwards and pitched their tents on the uplands between Bethel on the west, and Hai, "the ruin heap," on the east, marking the temporary encampment as usual by another rude altar, as a local sanctuary.

A failure of the rains, ere long, however, forced the patriarch to remove once more; this time, for a short period, to Egypt; the drought having caused a dearth in Palestine, while the valley of the Nile, watered by the unfailing bounty of the great river, then, as in after ages, attracted the neighbouring peoples in such times of scarcity.[3]

Different Semitic tribes, allied to the Hebrews,—apparently driven from their former homes in Chaldæa and northern Syria—had long pressed towards Egypt even in prosperous years, and were gradually filling the Delta to such an extent as threatened political danger. To check

[1] In Deut. xi. 30, we read of "the oaks of Moreh." The meaning of the word Moreh is variously given, as "the Teacher" (Schenkel's *Bib. Lex.*), "Arrow Flight," "Early Rain," "Fruitful." Mühlau and Volck's *H. W. B.* It was very likely the name of the owner of the ground, as in the case of Mamre, at Hebron.

[2] *Sinai and Palestine*, p. 296. *The Land and the Book*, p. 470.

[3] So Herod brought vast stores of wheat from Egypt for the relief of the Jews, in the years B.C. 23 and 24. Jos., *Ant.*, xv. 9, 2. Under Augustus, the wheat tax on Egypt for the wants of Rome, was 3,000,000 bushels a year. Friedländer, *Sittengesch. Roms*, vol. i. p. 30. Mr. Finn, in *Sunday at Home* (1872), p. 327, says that in 1870, the Philistine country was almost depopulated, the crops having failed, and the inhabitants having gone to Egypt for food. Egypt, on the other hand, has at times drawn supplies from Palestine, when the Nile has failed to rise.

their entrance in still greater numbers, which was almost as much dreaded as that of the northern hordes into the Roman empire in later ages, an Egyptian king of an earlier date than Abraham had built a strongly fortified wall across the isthmus of Suez; the prototype of such walls as those of Severus in Great Britain, or of that of Probus, along the border of the European provinces of Rome. Mizraim—the name of Egypt, including both Upper and Lower, for the word is dual—means, in fact, "the fortified" or "shut in," apparently from this great military wall, which was a hundred and seventy miles long, and protected the Nile valley from the nomadic Asiatic tribes. This name was, indeed, given to "the two Egypts" from the earliest times, among all the nations of Western Asia, though it seems to have been applied strictly, only to what is now Lower Egypt, which was divided into two provinces. Upper Egypt was unknown to the ancient world till after the Persian invasion.[1]

Already, as early as B.C. 2214, a papyrus of the Second Dynasty brings this wall before us as strictly guarded with sentries relieving each other at fixed hours, through the whole twenty-four of each day. There are printings, also, of officers taking down in writing the names of strangers wishing to pass through the gates and enter Egypt. In the Authorized Version this rampart is called Shur—which means "the Wall." But, though such a jealous watch was kept over the immigration of outside populations, especially the tent-using Shemites, it still continued; for the Egyptians needed shepherds, and admitted them for their own advantage; but in the end the evil anticipated was realized, apparently after Abraham's time, in the subversion of the

[1] Ebers' *Ægypten und die Bücher Moses'*, p. 79. Ebers thinks there were two walls, and that the dual form of the name may perhaps have referred to these.

native dynasty by "Shepherd Kings" of the hated Amu race; the name for shepherds on the monuments.

The town of Zoan, in the Delta, then known to the Egyptians by the same name as Tyre, was already a witness to this tide of Asiatic immigration, for it had been built by Semitic settlers, as shown by the worship followed in it, seven years before Hebron in southern Canaan.

Passing across the uplands of the south country of Canaan, and through the district of Hebron, Abraham would thus find little difficulty in entering a land to which so many of kindred blood had preceded him.

It is thought by some, indeed, that when he visited Egypt the great revolution had already taken place, which drove the native Pharaoh as a fugitive to the distant south, and seated in his place a Shepherd King, of the line known to the Egyptians as the Hyksos,[1] which really means "chiefs of the Shasu, or Bedouins," though used by the Nile people as meaning "robbers." But it is much more probable that the last kings of the Twelfth Dynasty, one of the greatest in Egyptian history, were still reigning,[2] and as the first six of these royal lines had reigned, it is believed, nearly fifteen hundred years, the settled government of the country must have been very old indeed, if Abraham entered the land while the Twelfth Dynasty was still on the throne.

In either case, when he passed the well-guarded frontier wall, a new and strange world would be around him. The vast pyramids were already ancient, for at least eight dynas-

[1] The word Hyksos is the name of hatred given by the Egyptains to these kings. It means "robber chiefs." Ebers' *Ægypten* in Riehm. Josephus, *C. Ap.*, i. 14, makes it = "shepherd kings."

[2] See Canon Cook, *Speaker's Comment.*, vol. i. *Excursus on Egypt, etc.* Ebers' *Ægypten und die Bücher Moses'*, p. 256, places the arrival of Abraham before the time of the Hyksos.

ties had passed away since the first had been built. Populous colonies of Semitic peoples had brought the north of the Delta into high cultivation, and filled it with busy commerce, while to the south of them, the whole valley of the Nile had been united under one sceptre; the risings of the Nile brought into strict control; a vast reservoir of the superfluous waters of each year's inundation provided in the huge artificial Lake Moeris, and the country covered with towns, cities, and villages, the former adorned by great temples and palaces, of which the ruins still excite wonder. A richly cultivated land would ere long open on all sides. Then, as now, the creaking of the great water-wheels, turned by oxen, would proclaim the source of the universal fertility, as they poured far and wide over the fields, through innumerable rivulets and wider channels, the life-giving stream of the Nile. Oxen dragging the plough or treading the corn, as the labourers sang at their work;[1] huge herds of cattle, or flocks of sheep; fragrant gardens, and rich orchards and vineyards, would vary the delightful picture with each hour's advance.

Nor would other equally pleasant details be wanting. The horse was as yet unknown,[2] but numerous, and often beautiful, asses served in its stead for all peaceful uses.

The physical characteristics of the people, their language, and even their ideas showed that they were, originally, of Asiatic origin: a branch, in fact, of the same Caucasian Cushites as founded the Babylonian kingdom. Immigra-

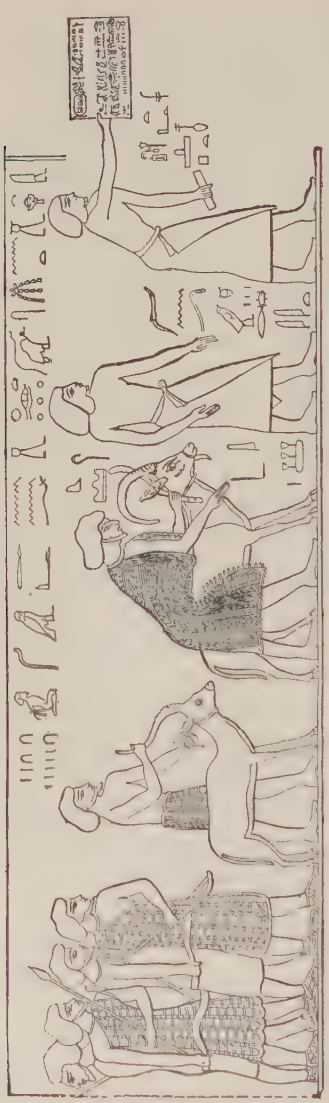
[1] Wilkinson's *Ancient Egyptians*, vol. ii. p. 43.

[2] This itself seems a proof that Abraham's visit was before the time of the Hyksos, who introduced the horse to Egypt. We find it there in Joseph's time and later (Gen. xlvii. 17, 18. Exod. ix. 3. Deut. xvii. 16). It was not introduced among the Hebrews till the reign of Solomon. Strabo (xvi. 784) says that the Nabathæans, even in his day, had no horses; and to the present time some tribes of Bedouins have never had any. Robinson's *Palestine*, vol. i. p. 343.

tion from the south, however, and the presence of aboriginal tribes, had led to a gradual mixture of blood, which explains the fact that the mummies and pictures of the earlier ages are nearest the Caucasian type, and further from the African than those of later date. It is impossible, indeed, to look at the old sculptures and paintings without feeling that they represent a people kindred to our own. There is, for example, in the Louvre collection, a figure of a scribe, of extreme antiquity; and in it the features are perfectly European, while the colour of the skin is a soft but light red. The kings, priests, and soldiers particularly, who alone kept their blood pure, show that the race had come from the same home in which the Semitic stock had first lived.

As a whole the Egyptians were a quiet and happy race, though the lordly nobles and priests looked on the poorer classes with unconcealed disdain, and made their lives bitter by manifold oppression. Amidst all, however, the land, as a whole, rejoiced. Hospitality abounded, and if there were sore toil by day, the evening was cheered even in the mud hovel by the song, and the dance, and the sound of the pipe and the harp. The usual dress was linen, coloured for the people at large, but pure white for the priests; that worn by the richer ladies being often too fine and transparent for modesty. The sportsman had his dogs, to hunt the crocodile or the hippopotamus; the fowler his trained cats, to take birds in the reeds on the edges of the canals and of the Nile; over whose waters glided the light skiff, the heavy raft laden with huge stones for public buildings or with produce, and the stately barge of nobles or of the palace.

That Abraham should have appeared before Pharaoh has been thought by some critics improbable; but, strange to



ARRIVAL OF SEMITIC STRANGERS IN ABRAHAM'S TIME. *From the Tombs at Beni Hassan.*

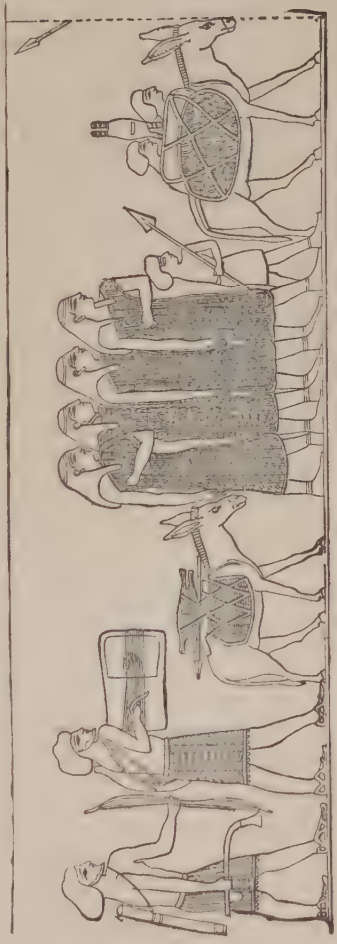
say, a written copy has been recovered of a former royal permission to a shepherd tribe to settle in the northern Delta; granted by Menephthah, the Pharaoh of the Exodus. From it we learn that foreigners were always brought before the king on their arrival, to receive liberty to stay in the country, or to be sent back. In the rock tombs hewn out of the steep hill on the east side of the Nile, half way between Memphis and Thebes, at the village of Beni Hassan, "the sons of Hassan," —an ancient Arab tribe long settled on the spot,—we have, moreover, a striking picture of the reception, by a great dignitary, of the representatives of a Semitic tribe exactly like Abraham's people, and that in the patriarch's own day; for the painting dates from his time.

The Amu,[1] or Semitic foreigners thus brought be-

[1] *Ebers*, p. 256.

fore us, are nomades, like the Hebrews, and have with them not only their wives and children, but their beasts and household effects, and even their arms; a sure proof of their political independence.

The details of the picture may help us to realize the circumstances of the appearance of Abraham before Pharaoh. A court scribe ushers in the Amu chief, who wears a sack-like coat, reaching to the knees, in red, white, and blue, elaborately bordered and fringed; with ornaments, in stripes and spots, throughout. He and his immediate attendant have removed their sandals, but the rest retain them. The chief leads an ibex, as a gift, bowing with outstretched hands as he presents it, and the next figure holds an antelope by a collar and by its horn. A third person follows, wearing only a kilt. Next come four men



ARRIVAL OF SEMITIC STRANGERS IN ABRAHAM'S TIME. *From the Tombs at Beni Hassan.*

in long closed blouses suiting a hot climate; two of them white; two red, white, and blue, in fancy patterns. All the four carry their arms—a spear and bow, with what may be a weapon of bent wood, like an Australian boomerang, for throwing; or possibly, the crooked stick still used by Arabs in driving their camels.[1] An ass follows, with panniers; partly laden, it would seem, with bright coloured cloth, for which Canaan was famous; but also showing the heads of two children nestled in them. Four women without any veils, succeed, wearing the tight-fitting shirt which is still the single garment of Arab girls; the one side kept up by a shoulder strap, but the arms and the other shoulder bare. Their feet are set off by red ancle-boots, edged on the top with white. All the figures seem bare-headed, but all have abundant hair; that of the women being bound round the crown by a fillet. A boy holding a spear and wearing a short sack goes before them, and a second ass, bearing a spear and what seems a shield, follows behind; the picture closing with two men, of whom the foremost plays on a large stringed instrument held out in front of him, and the other bears a bow and quiver, and a club; their only clothing, apparently, a tasselled fancy-patterned kilt, reaching from the waist to the knees.[2] "I view them," says Lepsius, "as a migrating Hyksos family, who pray to be received into the blessed land, and whose descendants, perhaps, opened the gates to the Semitic conquerors, allied to them by race."[3]

[1] Similar throw-sticks are still in use among the Bescharu Arabs of Sinai. Bonomi, *Nineveh*. p. 136. But see p. 324.

[2] See plate in Brugsch's *Egypt*, and in Ebers. The picture on the wall of the tomb is 8 feet long, and 1½ feet high. Ebers' *Egypten*, pp. 257–8. *Speaker's Commentary*, vol. i. pp. 445–6.

[3] *Letters from Egypt*, English trans., p. 112.

That Pharaoh should have been attracted by the beauty of Sarah, and should have taken her at once into his harem, as narrated in Genesis, is a striking illustration of the exact keeping of the incident with historical truth. It shows, also, that Sarah was not veiled, at least in Egypt, else her face could not have been seen. She followed, one may suppose, the practice of the Arab women in her own day, in the south of Palestine and round Beersheba, of going about unveiled, which was the custom in Ancient Egypt.

The court officials of the princes of the Nile valley seem to have been specially zealous in their efforts to secure beautiful women for their master. In the D'Orbiney Papyrus, there is an account of a faithless beauty whose sweet-smelling locks are found in the room of the Pharaoh, and shown by the slaves to his wise men and scribes. They bring them forthwith to their master as "the locks of a daughter of the god Ra Harmachu," adding, "The blood of that god is in her;" on which the Pharaoh[1] does not rest till he has, with great difficulty, secured her; after which he makes her his favourite.[2] We find, moreover, in a papyrus preserved at Berlin, a story still more strikingly resembling this incident in the life of Abraham. A workman has had his ass seized by an inspector, and reclaims it before the head officer, Meruitens, who in the end refers the matter to the king, a Pharaoh of the Eleventh Dynasty, and thus before the patriarch's time. After questioning the appellant, the king says, "He does not answer anything said to him. Let a written report be

[1] Pharaoh is not a proper name, but a title, like "the Czar," or rather like that of the Sultan - "The Sublime Porte"—that is, the "Lofty Gate." It means, literally, "The Great House," or, as we say, "palace," and is used on the monuments as equivalent to "His Majesty." Ebers, p. 264.

[2] *Papyrus D'Orbiney*, ix.

made to us: we comprehend the matter. Meanwhile his wife and children are the king's. Watch secretly over him, and supply him with food." The wife and children become royal property, and the officers of the court undertake the maintenance of the husband, as was the case of Abraham.[1]

The gifts of Pharaoh to Abraham in honour of Sarah bear the same mark of intimate knowledge of the Egyptian world. They included, we are told, "sheep and oxen, and he asses and men slaves, and women slaves, and she asses, and camels."[2] That the horse should not be mentioned is striking, for no figure or mention of it appears on the monuments of the Old Kingdom of Egypt, and it seems, as already noticed, to have been first introduced by the Hyksos,[3] who came, as some think, after Abraham's time. It is represented very often on the monuments of their age, and it is mentioned in the story of Joseph, though it first appears in Palestine, under Solomon. The Nabathæans of Petra, indeed, had not the horse even so late as in the century before Christ, and to this day it is not used, by some Bedouin tribes. Long-eared sheep are seen as early as the monuments of the Twelfth Dynasty—that under which, in all probability, the patriarch visited Egypt. In a tomb beside the Great Pyramid, there is a painting and inscription stating that the dead man owned no fewer than 2,235 common sheep and goats, and 973 of a finer kind, in all 3,208.[4] Cattle have always been raised in great numbers in Egypt; for their bones have been dug up from a great depth in the

[1] *Les Papyrus hiératiques de Berlin*, F. Chabas, pp. 14, 15.

[2] Gen. xii. 16. The words "he had," should be translated, "he had given him."

[3] Ebers, p. 222. See p. 314.

[4] Ebers, p. 266. Vigouroux, vol. i. p. 402. Lepsius, *Denkmäler*, Abth. ii. T. iii Blatt ix. 106, 132.

Delta,[1] and the monuments show that from the earliest times they have been employed in the same way as at present. In an inscription of the Twelfth Dynasty, a functionary called Ameni boasts that he had collected in the nome of Sahou, of which he was prefect, a herd of 3,000 bulls with their heifers. The ox was the animal most commonly used for drawing the plough, and dairy produce played a great part in the food of the Egyptians and in their religious ceremonies. Diodorus relates that in his time 360 bowls were daily filled with milk as offerings, by the priests who celebrated the mysteries of Osiris.[2] Under the New Empire there were officials who had the inspection of the bulls and heifers of the domain of the god Ammon. The scribe Anna, whose tomb has been discovered at Qurnah, had the office—his epitaph tells us—of selling the dairy produce of that domain.[3]

The presence of numerous asses in Egypt is proved by the paintings of Beni Hassan, and by the still older tombs near the pyramids, on which whole herds of asses meet us. Rich men boast in their epitaphs of having had them by thousands. In later ages, indeed, the god Set, to whom the ass was sacred, was viewed as "the evil one," and his special beast consequently became "an abomination to the Egyptians:" but, even after it had come to be hated, it was still much used for riding and burdens, though also sacrificed to Set by being thrown from the top of a rock. In the Egypt of Abraham's day, however, it was an object of respect, as it still is in Africa, where, as Sir S. Baker tells us, it would be taken as a compliment rather than the

[1] Lyell's *Antiquity of Man*, p. 41.

[2] Birch, *A Remarkable Papyrus of the Twelfth Dynasty*. Chabas, *Les Papyrus hieratiques de Berlin*, p. 47. Lepsius, *Denkmäler*. Abth. ii. T. iii. Blatt ix. 75.

[3] Chabas, *Etudes*, p. 296.

reverse to be told that one "was an ass"—so sprightly, intelligent and noble a creature is it in these regions.

The gift of camels to Abraham was long thought by hostile critics a proof of the late composition of this part of Genesis; but research has abundantly shown that the animal was known from the earliest ages in Egypt. It is not, indeed, represented on the monuments, but this must have risen from some of the numerous laws which restricted artists of those days to certain figures, drawn by fixed rules. Cocks and hens, which abounded on the Nile from the earliest times, and were even offered in sacrifice to the god Anubis,[1] are thus, in the same way, never found on any monument or in any painting.[2]

On his recovery of Sarah, Abraham was no longer permitted to remain in Egypt, but was conducted to the frontier wall, out of the country, by an Egyptian guard.[3] His stay in Egypt, however, while little flattering to his nobler traits, had added to his already great wealth, for he left it, with Lot, "very rich in cattle and in silver and gold." These metals were well known to the Egyptians of his day, but were as yet scarce in Palestine.[4] The silver mines of Egypt, in the Eastern desert,[5] enriched the country with both silver and gold, as did also the tributes from Ethiopia, Central Africa, and other countries. The use of silver, even before Abraham, is proved by the crown of a king of the Eleventh Dynasty, now preserved at Leyden. It is of gold and silver, the broad band being of both metals, the

[1] White and yellow fowls were thus offered. *Isis et Os.*, p. 61.

[2] The bones of dromedaries have been found in the deepest borings of the Nile mud. Ebers believes the camel to have been in use among the early Phœnician colonists of the Delta coast. It is not an African animal, and must have been brought to the Delta from Asia.

[3] Gen. xii. 20.

[4] Chabas, *Études*, p. 109.

[5] Wilkinson, vol. ii. p. 240.

nobler one concealing the less precious. In the time of the Twelfth Dynasty gold was wrought into very fine ornaments, as is seen in the pictures of the Beni Hassan tombs. Amenophis I. had a palace which was richly gilded throughout; with arches of lapis lazuli, and walls crusted with precious stones and bronze. Towards the close of the Ancient Empire coffins were entirely gilded. Dr. Birch has shown that gold washing was followed in Nubia under Amenophis.[1] The turquoise and copper mines of the Sinai peninsula are as old as the pyramids; and in the earliest dynasty we already meet official "overseers of the gold treasury." At a later date, indeed, in the reign of Rameses III., about 1200 B.C.,[2] there is a picture in the temple of Medinet Habu which shows the wealth of the Pharaohs as having become enormous. The treasury dazzles us with the display of gold and silver, in sacks, jars, or heaps, while commoner metals lie around in great masses like building stones.[3] If to this we add the golden chariots, chairs, and footstools, the golden doors and pillars, the vessels of gold, and the universal gilding of chambers, in the palaces of the Pharaohs of the New Kingdom, the royal wealth must abundantly have justified the words of one of the Pharaohs to a servant he wished to honour, that "he should wear gold round his neck, on his back, and on his feet, for having faithfully obeyed in all things."[4]

The two tribes of Abraham and Lot having no longer permission to remain in Egypt, wandered back by slow marches towards Canaan, over the uplands of the Negeb or South Country, which was then much more fertile than

1 *On a Historical Tablet of Rameses II.*, *Archæol.*, p. 376.
2 Brugsch, vol. ii. p. 140.
3 Dümichen, *Hist. Insch.*, 1867.
4 Lepsius, *Denkmäler*, T. iii. 97.

now,[1] to their old encampment between Bethel and Hai. The removal of an Arab camp, to new pasture grounds, must present much the same scene in all ages, and hence that of a tribe which Layard[2] saw on the march must help us to realize the old world picture of the daily stages of Abraham and Lot. "We found ourselves in the midst of wide-spreading flocks of sheep and camels. As far as the eye could reach, to the right, to the left, and in front, still the same moving crowd. Long lines of asses and bullocks, laden with black tents, huge cauldrons, and variegated carpets; aged women, and men no longer able to walk, tied on the heap of domestic furniture; infants crammed into saddle bags, their tiny heads thrust through the narrow opening, —balanced on the animal's back by kids or lambs tied on the opposite side; young girls clothed only in the close-fitting Arab shirt, which displayed rather than concealed their graceful forms; mothers with their children on their shoulders; boys driving flocks of lambs; horsemen armed with their long tufted spears, scouring the plains on their fleet mares; riders urging their dromedaries with their short hooked sticks,[3] and leading their high-bred steeds by the halter; colts galloping amongst the throng; high-born ladies seated in the centre of huge wings, which extend like those of a butterfly from each side of the camel's hump, and are no less gaudy and variegated. Such was the motley crowd through which we had to wend our way for several hours." Omit the horses, and you have a picture of the journeys of Abraham.

[1] Palmer, *On the Desert Et Tih*, *Palestine Fund Reports*, 1870.
[2] Layard's *Nineveh*, vol. i. p. 50.
[3] See p. 362.

CHAPTER XVII.

ABRAHAM'S SECOND RESIDENCE IN CANAAN.

ENCAMPING by the rude altar, which he had erected when formerly near Bethel, with Lot's tents not far from his own, Abraham soon found that increased wealth brought increased troubles. Disputes respecting the use of wells are a constant difficulty when more than one Bedouin encampment has to water its flocks from the same sources, and such strifes rose between the herdsmen of the two patriarchs. Moreover, the pasturage was insufficient for the sheep and cattle of both ; and, in short, it was advisable that uncle and nephew should part.[1] Nor could a finer illustration of the lofty and unselfish character of Abraham have been shown than that which marked his proposal that this should be the case. Though the whole country had been given him by God Himself, he waived his rights. "Let there," says he, "be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdsmen and thy herdsmen ; for we be brethren. Is not the whole land before thee ? Separate thyself, I pray thee, from me ; if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right, or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left."

[1] When in 1863, the Beni Sakk'r tribe, which is under two sheiks, encamped in the Ghor, just before their raid on the plain of Esdraelon, their tents, like those of the Midianites, covered the ground for miles, as far as the eye could reach from Mount Beisan, and in a week there was not a green blade to be seen, where, before the arrival of these locusts, one stood knee deep in the rank herbage. Tristram's *Land of Israel*, p. 493.

The features of the locality enable us to fix the very spot where this notable example of following the things that make for peace was uttered. Abraham had apparently built his altar on the summit of the "mountain east of Bethel," and called by the Arabs "the hill of stones;" the only point from which there is a view into the breadth of the Jordan valley, above the Dead Sea.

There he and Lot then stood, with all the land spread out like a map at their feet. The country around is now only a succession of grey, desolate, rounded limestone rocks; hills, without a tree, but strewn with beds of loose stones of all sizes. Yet it may then have presented lovely park-like glades, as in Gilead, with open pasturage, shaded by well-wooded slopes, stretching into the blue distance; "northward, southward, eastward, and westward," in varied beauty; for even so late as the days of Elisha bears found shelter in the rough woods of the Bethel landscape, now so repulsive in its stony bleakness. But the richest spot in the view, the circle of the Jordan, lay eastward, as it were at their feet; where they could see the deep course of the river opening into a broad valley, before its waters finally lost themselves in what is now called the Dead Sea. Sodom and Gomorrah lay in this northern part, and must have risen from amidst its rich verdure, traces of which still remain, and at once attract the eye of any one looking down from this hill; for an abundant spring, which still gushes from the foot of the Western Hills, even now supports a green fringe of vegetation, before it is lost in the dry, thirsty soil. But, utilized as it and all the other springs from the hills were in those days, they watered the land far and near, making the whole landscape, as seen by the patriarch, the ideal of loveliness, which could only be

described in their oriental modes of speech as "the garden of Jehovah;" or as bringing to the memory the witching scenes of luxuriance they had recently left behind them at Zoan,[1] in Egypt—where the bountiful Nile, led everywhere through the thirsty soil, repaid the care by a fertility and luxuriance that had passed into a proverb.

Nor was natural beauty all. The Jordan cities lay on the great route of Eastern travel, and promised to the keen eye of Lot a rich market for the produce of his flocks and herds, as well as the luxuries and refinements of wealth. More worldly-minded than Abraham, he chose this seductive region, forgetful that outward advantage may be bought too dear, if it involve injury, moral or spiritual. Choosing the rich valley, and with it the corrupt civilization which had developed itself fearfully amidst the temptations and influence of an Indian climate, he turned his face to the deep descent where this paradise lay spread out, some thirteen hundred feet below the level of the Mediterranean; and, nomade like, pitched his tent outside the gates of Sodom. Abraham, on the other hand, forthwith received a new gift of the whole country from God, as if to mark how much higher in His sight is the gentle spirit that trusts to Him rather than to selfish plans of its own, like that of Lot.

But Hebron, not Bethel, was to be the chief resting-place of Abraham. It offered, on the wide open country round, free pasture; better suited for his flocks and herds, and more abundant. Unlike every other town of Palestine, it is built at the foot of a hill, but it stretches up the slope facing south, the flat-roofed houses rising over each other,

[1] Zoar in the English version is undoubtedly a misreading for Zoan, which is retained in the Syriac. Zoan was especially rich in irrigation.

and the great mosque of Machpelah towering above all. Before it, running nearly east and west, there is a broad, sunny valley, shut in on the south by low round hills, which with the valley itself are dotted with vineyards and clumps of olives. The business streets—mere dirty lanes and very narrow—are at the bottom of the hill ; some covered over by an arched stone roof with only a hole here and there to let in the light. The shops are small recesses, above which rise the houses of the owners, hidden by the tunnel-like roof. The front is entirely open and is some feet back from the roadway, a broad stone ledge running along before it, on which, in what answers to the window itself, the goods for sale are displayed ; the owner very often sitting squatted among them, solemnly smoking his long pipe or reading the Koran. Many, however, are down a step and are very dark and wretched. The town gate is a large, castle-like structure striding across the roadway, and allowing entrance only by a central arch. On the right hand, as you approach it, is the famous pool of Hebron, over which David hanged up the hands and the feet of the murderers of Ishbosheth ; and it was in the shadow of the gateway arch, close by, that Joab treacherously murdered Abner. Both pool and gateway have been there in all probability since before Abraham's time, though no doubt more than once renewed since then. The great square pool, within its strongly-built wall, a flight of steps to the water at each corner, was as busy a scene then as now ; women washing their clothes in it, water carriers filling their huge skin bottles from it, as they do to-day, and a crowd of loungers leaning on the wall, or hanging round the well, which stands on what would with us be the pavement leading to the gateway, a spot always picturesque

with the town maidens filling their water jars from it, and moving away with them on their heads or shoulders. The hills above the town are bare and stony; but, on the south side of the valley, both east and west, there are fine groves of olives and other fruit trees, while vineyards run up the slopes or cover the levels on all sides. Contrary to expectation, however, they add nothing, or very little, to the attractions of the landscape: for the vines are cut back to two or three runners each, and trained along the ground, though held up by a wooden crotch to keep the clusters from actually touching it. Hebron must always have been a small place; but large towns or cities are very rare in the East. A few industries flourish in a sleepy, primitive way in it: glass ornaments, rude enough, for sale to the pilgrims at Jerusalem, and bottles of skin used over the whole country, the entire skin of goats and calves being roughly tanned by oak chips or bark, into vessels, exactly like the living creatures in shape—the water or milk or oil jars of the community. Whole rows of them, stuffed with the oak chips or bark, may be seen dangling in the wind in the manufacturer's yard: the only tanning being this simple process.

What the place was in Abraham's day is not easy to fancy, but it must in its main features have very much resembled the Hebron of to-day. Somewhere near it, as a convenient centre from which his flocks might go out to the uplands for pasture, Abraham pitched his tents, under the shadow of some evergreen oaks known as belonging to Mamre, a local dignitary, and near them, as was always his custom, built a third altar to Jehovah. The precise spot may perhaps be marked by the ruins of an ancient enclosure mentioned in Josephus, which still remains, three miles to

the north of Hebron. They lie a short distance from the track which leads on towards Bethlehem and Jerusalem, and consist of two courses of ancient hewn stones, one of which is more than fifteen feet long and over a yard thick. From this wall another runs off at a right angle, forming, it may be, the relics of an ancient enclosure which must have been two hundred feet long by a hundred and sixty feet broad. This is called by the Jews of Hebron "Abraham's house," and may very probably mark the spot where he pitched his tent, and where the oaks of Mamre grew. The name has at least been given to it for fifteen hundred years, and the peculiar bevel of the stones, as well as their size, show that they are very old.

Different spots, however, naturally put in a claim for being the one thus honoured. A tree at the Russian Hospice, near Hebron, claims still to be Abraham's oak, but though it has had the name given to it for three hundred years, it is, in reality, quite modern compared with even a late antiquity. Age, even now, however, tells on it, for it has lost more than half its branches in the last twenty-five years, and though still green and strong in parts, is in others apparently dead. Its trunk measures thirty-two feet round near the earth, and divides at the height of about twenty-five feet into numerous branches, which spread out to a circuit of nearly a hundred steps. A similar one, two miles north of Hebron, was honoured in the fourth century as Abraham's oak, so that it is hard to say where the true site was. Yet, of the tree which he commemorates, the Jewish historian [1] is not afraid to assert that it was thought to be as old as the world, and had seen Abraham receive

[1] *Bell. Jud.*, iv. 7, 9.

angels beneath its shadow. But it is now gone, being said to have been burned down so recently as the seventeenth century, after having been an object of almost idolatrous honour for untold ages.[1]

Here, at last, he could rest, almost at home, in this upland vale, with its mingled town and country life, its wells, and its clumps of terebinths; amidst the cool and delightful climate of an elevation of nearly three thousand feet above the sea.[2] If Lot had the tropical luxuriance of Sodom, Abraham had the refreshing breeze of the hills, and their soft slopes sprinkled with stretches of grey olives, pomegranates, figs, apricots, and almonds; while round him spread waving patches of wheat and barley, green gardens, and vineyards so famous, that the Jews believed the vine had been first planted there by God Himself. His flocks, moreover, had only to wander to the next heights, beyond this quiet retreat, to have before them unlimited upland pastures.

A strange disturbance of this pleasant region soon, however, broke its peacefulness for a time. The various kingdoms of the valley of the Euphrates and Tigris had long been the scene of stirring events. Great military conquerors had risen, one after another, since the time of Nimrod; until, in Abraham's day, a huge empire under the kings of Elam—the mountainous district on the eastern side of the lower Tigris and Euphrates—stretched thence to the shore of the Mediterranean; a distance of nearly a thousand miles, in a straight line, and of much more by the northern route, which alone was practicable for armies. Chedorlao-

[1] *Sinai and Palestine*, p. 142.

[2] Hebron. Schenkel's *Bib. Lex.* Sepp's *Jerusalem und das Heilige Land*, vol. i. p. 594.

mer, or, as his name is given in the Septuagint, Kodorlogomer, the reigning king, belonged to a dynasty which has perpetuated its memory even to our times in the old Assyrian inscriptions. In these there is frequent mention of a great conquering line of kings of Elam, the house of the Kudurs,[1] each of whom appended to this common title some personal affix; the name Chedorlaomer being the Hebrew form of Kudur Lagomer: "the servant" of the god Lagomer, a famous divinity of Elam. Strange to say, an inscription of the Assyrian king Assurbanipal, who reigned B.C. 667,[2] narrating his conquest of Elam and its capital, Susa—the Shushan of Esther—tells us that he then carried off an image of the goddess Nana, which had been taken from Babylon 1,635 years before, by an Elamite king, Kudurnanhundi, who had "laid hands on the temples of Accad," or Babylonia.[3] This successful invasion of Babylon must therefore have happened about B.C. 2300, a period earlier than Abraham's time, and strongly confirms the narrative of Genesis in reference to an Elamite empire. Still more, inscriptions have been found on bricks at Mugheir, the ancient Ur, of a Kudurmabuk, of Elam, whose empire extended over South Chaldæa, and also over the "Westland,"—that is, according to the usage of the inscriptions, over Canaan,—his dominions consequently reaching from Susiana to the Mediterranean.[4] Thus the invasion of Chedorlaomer is virtually established as a historical fact, altogether apart from the testimony of Scripture. In its glory

[1] Kudur = in Assyrian to "service," "adoration." *Western Asiatic Inscriptions* vol. ii. p. 65. It seems a Finnish word. The Ostiac Samoyed equivalent is Kote Kotö = servant.

[2] Maspero, p. 436. Schrader makes the date B.C. 650.

[3] Smith's *History of Assurbanipal* (1871), p. 250.

[4] Schrader, *Keilinschriften*, p. 48.

his rule stretched a thousand miles from east to west, and five hundred from north to south.[1]

Under this over-lord were various lesser kings, of whom we know little. Amraphel, "the son reigns,"[2] chief king of Sinear or Shinar, the ancient Babylon; Arioch, "the servant of the Moon,"[3] king of Ellasar, or Larsam, a Mesopotamian town or district[4]—the modern Senkereh, on the east of the Euphrates, between Erech and Ur, where there was a great Sun-temple.[5] Of this town and district, the inscriptions reveal the name of an ancient king Eriaku, or Urukh, perhaps this Arioch, or some ancestor, but it may be the famous "king of Sumir and Accad,"[6] lord of Ur, renowned as the great builder of cities, temples, and fortresses. A third completes the list. "Tidal," or rather as the Greek has it, "Thargal," the great chief[7] of "the Goim,"[8] apparently the "Guti,"—the Semitic tribes of northern Mesopotamia, part of whom afterwards became the Assyrian[9] nation. An invasion of Canaan by Chedorlaomer fourteen years before had subdued the country to him and made it tributary, but after twelve years' subjection a general revolt had followed, the payment of the tribute had been refused, and it may be the commercial interests of the populations on the Euphrates threatened; the line of travel on which they depended running from the great

[1] The Egyptian monuments, in exact accordance with Genesis, state that before the conquest of Canaan by the Hebrews, and till the kings of the eighteenth Pharaonic dynasty, the ruling power in Western Asia was that of the *Rutennu*, the peoples inhabiting Assyria. Under Rameses II., the Pharaoh of the Oppression, they no longer, however, held Canaan. The power had passed to the Khetas, or Hittites. Chabas, *Voyage d'un Egyptien*, pp. 318–322.

[2] Schrader.

[3] Lenormant.

[4] Schrader, *Keilinschriften*, p. 135.

[5] Lenormant, *La Langue Primitive*, p. 378.

[6] See p. 239.

[7] Rawlinson, *Herod.*, i. 364.

[8] Goim = (in Heb.) Gentiles.

[9] Lenormant, *La Langue Primitive*, p. 376.

river, through the revolted districts, to the Gulf of Akaba.[1] In all probability Abraham was still in Haran when the first invading army marched northwards, on its way to the west, and would thus know all it implied when he now heard at Hebron that the Elamite king, with his vassals, had a second time marched into Palestine, to reduce the refractory chiefs once more to obedience.

Crossing the Khabour, perhaps at Arban ; the Belik near Haran, and the Euphrates at Carchemish, the invaders would pass south, by Hamath in the Lebanon, and Damascus, to the territory of the rebels.[2] Sweeping on, along the east of the Jordan, to cut off the allies of the revolted kings, their first blow fell on the gigantic Rephaim in their chief town—Ashteroth Karnaim—the sanctuary of Astarte, the goddess of the crested moon. The Zuzim, of Ham, on the eastern side of the Dead Sea,[3] apparently the same as the Zamzummim ; and the terrible Emim,[4] at Shaveh Kiriathaim—"the plain of the Twin Towns," somewhere near, —were next attacked. Pressing still south, beyond the Dead Sea, by the valley now known as El Arabah, the Horites, or "Cave-men"[5] of the rough mountain range of

[1] Tuch, in *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Morgenl. Gesell.* (1847), p. 161.

[2] Tomkins' *Studies on the Times of Abraham.*

[3] There is still a Hameitat about six miles east of the lower part of the Dead Sea. The name is read Hemta in the Targums, so that the identity of the place seems established. Tristram's *Land of Moab*, p. 117.

[4] The name Emim means "the terrible race." They held what was afterwards Moab.

The Zamzummim seem to have owed their name to an imitation of what was regarded as their barbarous and unintelligible dialect. They held at least part of the country known as that of the Ammonites, on the east of Jordan. Their name comes from a verb, to "hum, to murmur, to make a noise." Fürst, however, thinks it means "the strong."

[5] That cave-men lived then in Palestine seems to me to cast doubt on the assumption of a necessarily immense antiquity for the cave-men of Europe. Strabo gives a curious account of this race, which was found as far west as Mauritania, and as far east as the Caucasus, but especially in Idumea and the coasts of Abyssinia. The

Seir,[1] presently felt the terrors of war. Marching thence, through a wild and broken country, the conquerors turned their faces to the west till they reached the "Oak of Paran,"[2] on the edge of the wilderness of that name; now the desert of Et Tih, on the far south-west of Palestine. The countless wadies or dry watercourses hollowed out of the limestone uplands of that region, and giving it its name, were then, however, far richer in fertility and population than now; for nothing is more certain than that the destruction of trees, and the long neglect of irrigation, has since those ages changed the extreme south of Palestine into a literal wilderness, where before there were vineyards and a settled population.[3] Turning now once more to the east, having reached the limits of their march, the victorious allies came to En-Mishpat, "the spring of judgement," called also Kadesh, "the Sanctuary;" afterwards famous in the wilderness life of Israel, but then apparently the seat of an ancient oracle, and also the chief encampment of the Amalekites, whose whole country they wasted with fire and sword. Next came the turn of the Amorites, whose chief seat was at Hazezon Tamar, "the groves of palms,"

women, he tells us, painted themselves with antimony; the men went about naked, or in skins of cattle, and carried clubs, spears, and shields. The wives were in common, except those of the chiefs, for the race had chiefs. All wore shells round their necks as a protection against witchcraft. Their food consisted not only of flesh, but of the bones and skin of beasts pounded up with it. Some were circumcised, like the Egyptians. But their treatment of the dead was at once the strangest and most revolting of their peculiarities, for they tied the corpse neck and heels together with twigs, and then pelted it with stones amidst shouts and laughter, till they had covered it up, when they laid a ram's horn on the cairn and went off. Their drink is said, by Strabo, to have been the mixed blood and milk of their cattle. Surely this state of degradation in historical periods makes any need of an immense antiquity to account for it in Britain and elsewhere, unnecessary.

Bertheau, *Geschichte der Israeliten*, has an elaborate essay on the Horites, pp. 147 ff.

[1] Seir means "rough," "rugged."

[2] Paran = the hollowed out.

[3] Palmer's *The Desert of the Tih. Palestine Fund Reports*, 1870.

afterwards Engedi, "the fountain of the kid;" a small oasis on the western edge of the Dead Sea, 1,300 feet below the high plateau of southern Judæa, over which the invaders had marched to reach it. And now the enemy had at last almost entered the rich circle of the Jordan, and had only to strike north to reach its wealthy cities and towns:—Sodom, "the walled;" Gomorrah, the town in "the cleft;"[1] Admah, "the strong place;"[2] Zeboim, "the town of the gazelles," perhaps in flattery of its maidens; and Zoar, "the small." There was no chance of escape nor any hope of again, in Tyrian fashion, buying peace by renewed tribute. The population must meet their invaders and fight for their hearths and lives. Each town had its king: Bera, "the gift of God;" Birsha, "the strong;" Shinab, "the glorious;" Shemeber, "the proud,"[2] and under them their people, came out to battle on the broad plain at the head of the Dead Sea,[3] but only to be utterly overthrown. The ground was full of bitumen pits, that may well have broken their ranks. Bera and Birsha were killed, and the scattered remnant of the force, with the whole population that could flee to the eastern hills, did so, while the victors sacked the towns and carried off much plunder and many prisoners; among whom were Lot and his family. Painfully remounting the 1,300 feet of cliff on the west of the valley, at the gorge of Engedi, or passing up the line of the Jordan on its eastern side, the conquerors had now only to march home in triumph, laden with spoil and rich in captives. But meanwhile the news of his nephew's misfortunes had reached Abraham at Hebron.

[1] Fürst. [2] These are the meanings given by Fürst.

[3] Vale of Siddim = Valley of the Broad Plains, lying then, as now, north of the Dead Sea.

As the head of a great tribe, he was on a footing of equality with the kings around; and, though a man of peace, he had all the fire of the Arab when the occasion demanded. This, the fate of his kinsman instantly roused. Calling to his help, Mamre, "the manly," Eshcol, "the brave,"[1] and Aner, "the branch," Amorite chiefs with whom he lived on terms of friendship, they joined their contingents to his levy of three hundred and eighteen trained guards of his own encampment; and the whole, numbering likely over a thousand men, started instantly in pursuit of the retiring foe, who had reached Laish, afterwards known as Dan, on the east side of the Jordan, some thirty miles north of the Sea of Galilee, before they were overtaken. With keen military instinct, Abraham had determined on a night surprise; trusting, no doubt, to the carelessness of an Eastern army, which takes little precaution against such attacks.[2] No news had reached Chedorlaomer of the pursuit, and his men lay, some asleep and some drunk, says Josephus,[3] when Abraham—dividing his force into sections acting from different points, like those of Gideon's band, centuries later, in a nearly similar case; or the Chaldæans in their attack in "three bands"[4] on the camels of Job—rushed on the great camp, causing an instant panic which soon became a complete rout. Nor did Abraham give them time to rally; but, pressing on, chased the fleeing hordes towards the range of Anti-Libanus, for two days, as far as Hobah, north[5] of

[1] So Hitzig, "all the man;" Dillmann prefers "the grape cluster."

[2] Even at this day the Bedouins have no sentinels or outposts. Burckhardt's *Notes on the Bedouins*, vol. i. p. 303.

[3] *Ant.*, i. 10, 1.

[4] 1 Sam. xi. 11. Job i. 17.

[5] The English version says "on the left hand of Damascus," but the left in Hebrew means the north, for position was reckoned among the Hebrews with the speaker facing the east. Thus, in Job xxiii. 9, "left" and "right" mean north and south. See p. 53.

Damascus, till they were utterly scattered.[1] Lot and his family, with the other captives, were thus recovered, with all the plunder taken on their great raid by the invaders.

Returning slowly southwards, rich with the plunder of the camp, and with a long train of rescued Canaanite prisoners of war, Abraham was met by two princes of the country, at some spot known as the King's Vale; perhaps among the uplands of Ephraim.[2] whither the march must have led as it passed on through Shechem, towards Hebron. The one was the new king of Sodom, who came, doubtless, to do homage to his deliverer as the great man of the day, for Abraham's victory had raised him above any of the local chiefs. He had acted only from friendship to Lot, but by the laws of war the whole booty was his; though he might have been expected to restore the captives recovered, to their owners or homes, instead of retaining them as his personal slaves. Such an arrangement the king of Sodom now pressed on him.[3] But he misunderstood the magnanimous nature with which he had to do, for Abraham had undertaken his great task with no ulterior thoughts of gain. "I have lifted up my hand," and sworn "unto Jehovah," said he, "the most high God, the framer[4] of heaven and earth, that I will not take so much as a thread or the thong of a sandal,[5] lest thou shouldst say, 'I have made Abraham rich:' save

[1] See a vivid picture of this rout in *The Land and the Book*, p. 215.

[2] Dillmann, p. 253.

[3] If any one recovered from an enemy the goods of a friend, they were the property of the conqueror -a hard enough law, which Abraham was above enforcing for himself, though he stood on its letter as regarded his confederates. Michaelis, *Mosaisches Recht*, vol. iii. p. 252.

[4] Not "possessor," as the English version has it.

[5] De Wette's translation. Roberts says it is still a Hindoo saying for having taken nothing, that one has not taken even a piece of the thong of a worn-out sandal. It is also an Arab proverb. Ges., *Thes.*, p. 452.

only that which the force have eaten, and the share of the men who went with me, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; let them take what is theirs." Abraham would have nothing to do with Sodom except to render it a service.

But the chief personage who thus came out to welcome the victorious patriarch was one round whom legend has delighted to gather. Melchizedek, the king of righteousness,[1] ruler of Salem, "priest of the Most High God," who appears in this incident for a moment and then suddenly vanishes, has in all ages, alike from his name, which itself commands respectful awe; his office and faith at such a time, and in such populations; and the silence observed respecting his origin or history, been a favourite subject for speculation. We know neither his parentage, nor the place of his birth, nor his successor in his office and dignities, and hence he offers a striking type of our divine Lord.[2] It is quite possible that, like Abraham, he may have been one of the early Pilgrim Fathers who had left Chaldæa, to escape the growing bitterness and intensity of idol worship, which were making fidelity to the faith of purer ages impossible.[3] His name and that of the place over which he ruled, are purely Semitic, and may thus point to his belonging to the clans of that race beyond the Euphrates.[4] But this seems a questionable ground, since the Phœnicians, and at least some of the Canaanite tribes, spoke a language almost if not quite identical with Hebrew, while the tribes beyond the Euphrates spoke Aramaic. Indeed, Abraham's ability to mingle freely

[1] Or "justice," as Kalisch translates it. It is curious to notice that in Joshua's time the king of Jerusalem bore the name of Adonizedek, "the lord of righteousness." Is this a ground for believing that Salem must have been Jerusalem?

[2] The Jews, ever fond of the marvellous, affected to regard Melchizedek as a son of Shem—a relic of the long perished golden age of the world.

[3] Gen. xii. 1.

[4] So, Kalisch.

with the peoples around him, seems to imply that on entering Canaan he abandoned his native speech and adopted theirs, making Hebrew for the first time the speech of his race.[1] A striking discovery in connection with the cuneiform tablets found lately at Tel Amarna on the Nile, throws unexpected light on the whole incident of Melchizedek. Some of these documents, dating from a time long before the Exodus, are found to be despatches from the governor of Jerusalem to the kings of Egypt. The name of the official is equivalent, in Hebrew, to Hadad-dob, and, strange to say, he claims to have been made ruler of the city by a divine oracle, not by the appointment of the Egyptian or any other monarch. The god to whom he owed his dignity is Marru, who was regarded as identical with the Babylonian god Uras—the Eastern Sun—who had a temple on Mount Moriah, thus consecrating that height as a holy place a great many centuries before Solomon's day. Marru was, in fact, a form of Baal, and bore the title of "the Mighty King," and the governors of Jerusalem were named and appointed by the then famous oracle connected with his shrine. The office was, thus, not hereditary; it did not descend to any one from father or mother, just as the office of Melchizedek, king of Salem and priest of the Most High God, had not been derived from his parents, so that, in the words of Scripture, he had (as regarded his dignities) neither father nor mother.

Melchizedek's pure and holy faith in the "Most High

[1] Bunsen, *Bibel Urkunden*, vol. i. p. 102. Eichhorn's *Einleitung*, vol. i. p. 59; ii. p. 1. Kalisch's *Bible Studies*, vol. ii. p. 3. It is curious to notice that after having adopted the Hebrew of the Canaanites from Abraham's day, the Jews went back to their original Aramaic, and gave up Hebrew, as soon as they were carried off to Babylon, Abraham's early land.

God" was doubtless a relic of the anciently universal recognition of the One Creator, and is one of the proofs incidentally afforded in such other cases as that of Abimelech, king of Gerar; Jethro, the Midianite; Balaam, from the mountains of Assyria; and Job, the Arab; that God has at no time left Himself without a witness even in lands secluded from the direct privileges of His people. El Eliōn, the name given by Melchizedek to God, was not indeed new or unknown, for El, or Il, "the Mighty One," was the ancient supreme god of the Semitic races of Babylonia, and was known in Palestine by the Phœnicians; and even the great title, Eliōn, "the Highest," had been adopted by them, corrupt and idolatrous as they had already become. With them, indeed, both names only marked one divine Being among many, though perhaps the highest; nor is it to be overlooked that while Melchizedek uses the general expression "the Most High God," Abraham, in repeating it, prefixes the personal name Jehovah;[1] as if to claim for Him the exclusive right to supreme divinity. With this weighty addition, though not without it, he recognizes the God of Melchizedek as Him whom he, himself, worshipped.[2]

But not only is Melchizedek a king, he is also the first who bears the ancient and sacred, but often much abused, name of "*Priest*." The office had not yet been separated from that of king, and, indeed, in after ages it was still

[1] Gen. xiv. 22. Cohen, *Darstellung des Gottesdienstes*, p. 21, notices this.

[2] Most critics are of opinion that Salem was Jerusalem; but it has been fancied by some that a place eight miles south of Scythopolis, where John the Baptist laboured, is intended. Jerome tells us that, in his day, the so-called palace of Melchizedek was still shown there. Abraham had certainly to pass by Scythopolis on his return, and hence Salem may have been the seat of Melchizedek's rule. Winer gives striking reasons for preferring Jerusalem. Gesenius thinks Salem, not Jerusalem, was the place. *Thes.*, xiv. 22.

nominally applied to the sons of David,[1] and even to humbler personages in the court of Solomon;[2] but in these cases tradition seems to have retained a title which, though once real in similar connections, was now simply one of dignity. From Melchizedek, Abraham accepts a priestly blessing. The highest earthly one in the land, bowing before a still higher spiritual, and recognizing in him the servant of God, expresses his gratitude for the signal mercies just vouchsafed him, by giving to God, as represented by His priest, the first tithes of which we read —"the tenth part of all the spoil"—an act which became an authoritative historical precedent among his descendants ever after. Even Jacob, at Bethel, remembered it,[3] and Moses put it in practice as a public law, that the tenth of the field, the orchard, and the herd[4] should be given to the priests, as to God; besides a tribute from all booty of war.[5]

Ten years had passed since Abraham had entered Canaan, and he was still without an heir, when Sarah, acting on the custom still common in the East, gave one of her female slaves to her husband as a concubine, or wife of secondary rank; with the design of adopting as her own the children of the union.[6] From among the slaves brought from Egypt, perhaps given by Pharaoh, one Hagar was selected for this honour; but the result, as too often happens in polygamous countries, was unhappy. Even before

[1] 2 Sam. viii. 18. The word "priest" is supposed from the phraseology of the parallel passage, 1 Chron. xviii. 17, to mean here "the first at the king's hand," that is, in rank.

[2] 1 Kings iv. 5. "Principal officer" is literally a "priest."

[3] Gen. xxviii. 22. [4] Lev. xxvii. 30 ff.

[5] Num. xxxi. 31. 2 Sam. viii. 11. 1 Chron. xxvi. 27.

[6] Jacob's wives did the same, Gen. xxx. 1 ff. The old law of Israel (Exod. xxi. ff.) even gave the Hebrew maiden sold by her father on account of his poverty, a claim on her purchaser, to be made either his own concubine or that of his son.

a child was born, jealousy sprang up in the mistress towards the maid, who fled to the desert to escape Sarah's anger, and only returned when divinely warned to do so. But the son whom she presently bore—Ishmael, "God hears"—was after a time followed by a son borne by Sarah herself, who, of course, at once took the place of the son of the concubine, as Abraham's heir. Some fifteen years had passed, during which the now disinherited lad had been the acknowledged successor to his father's rank and wealth; and it was not easy either for him or his mother to sink at once into insignificance, and resign the distinction they had so long enjoyed. Heart-burnings naturally followed, and in the end, Sarah would not be contented till both mother and lad were sent away from the encampment, to join some other tribe, and return to Abraham no more. To us it seems strange that the mother of his first-born son should be thus treated; but it has always been the rule in the East that the elevation of a female slave to be a secondary wife or concubine, in no degree affects her servile position, and leaves her children slaves to her owner, like herself liable to be sold away or sent off at a moment's notice, though this is seldom done.[1] In this case, moreover, Hagar was Sarah's property, and would be treated by her as such. Yet it was no slight task to bring Abraham to carry out her will, nor would she apparently have gained her point, had not the patriarch been divinely warned that what seemed to be only harsh jealousy, was in reality in accordance with an all-wise Providence. Even then, however, he rose up early in the morning, as if fearful that his obedience to the heavenly counsel might fail if he delayed; and, doubtless with a heavy heart, sent mother and son away. The touching

[1] Michaelis, *Mosaisches Recht*, vol. ii. pp. 125, 352.

story of her forlorn wandering in the desert, to this and that hollow, in hopes of finding some Arab tents she might join, or some spring at which she might obtain water to quench the burning thirst of a region so dry and scorching in the sun, is known to us all. The wells in these parts are known only to the Bedouin, who will not tell of them to strangers, but Hagar in her weary journey providentially came on one of these out of the way fountains, or wells. Her laying Ishmael under a retem or broom, the only shrub of the desert, is a vivid touch of local colouring. Slight though the shade afforded must, in any case, be, it is always hailed by the wanderer as a great relief from the overpowering heat. It was under just such a bush that Elijah stretched himself, and every traveller avails himself of the same shade now, when he happily finds it on his track. There is still, in most households, a feast on the weaning of a son among the Arabs, and the festivity on the weaning of Isaac had been the occasion of this final rupture.[1] It led to Ishmael becoming the father of the wide family of Bedouin tribes, afterwards known as Ishmaelites; who ultimately spread over the desert, from the eastern edge of Egypt to the north-west coasts of the Persian Gulf, and also over the Hauran, east of the Jordan, to Lebanon,—that is, as a whole, over all Northern Arabia.[2]

[1] Isaac may have been three or four years old at his weaning, if not older. The child Samuel must have been some size when, on his being weaned, his mother took him to Shiloh and left him there (1 Sam. i. 24). If Isaac was older, weaning must have had a different meaning than it has with us. The Mohammedan law prohibits a woman weaning her child before it is two years old, except with the consent of her husband. The mother, in 2 Macc. vii. 27, says she has suckled her son three years. In India a child is weaned only after three years. See Winer, art. "Kinder." At Jerusalem, it is one of the difficulties in conducting the "Child's Hospital" that children are at the breast for two or even three years, so that they cannot be separated easily from their mothers. The Septuagint makes Ishmael so young when his mother was sent away that Abraham put the child on her shoulder.

[2] Riehm, art. "Ismael."

The disastrous end of the cities of the plain had happened before this breach in the patriarch's circle. The agencies by which it was brought about, and the situation of the doomed towns, have been equally disputed. It is certain, however, that the present Dead Sea is of immensely greater age than the time of Abraham, for it belongs geologically to the oldest seas in the world; its origin reaching back to the period of the Secondary Rocks, when a great part of Southern Germany and Switzerland was as yet below the ocean. Its level stood formerly much higher than now, for ancient beaches are still seen on the hills, fourteen hundred feet above its present surface. The Gulf of Akaba, on the Red Sea, is thirty-five feet higher than the Mediterranean, while the Dead Sea is thirteen hundred feet below it,[1] so that no waters could well be more utterly separated than those of the Jordan and the Red Sea. Still, there is no doubt that, in a remote geological period, the whole Jordan valley, from Lebanon to the Red Sea, was a branch of the Indian Ocean. The Dead Sea is, in fact, an almost unique phenomenon. Its surface is, as I have said, amazingly depressed below the sea-level, but it lies in a bowl or cauldron itself thirteen hundred feet deep at its lowest point. The edge of this bowl, however, reaches only to two-thirds of its length from north to south, and the depth of the other third is, in great part, no more than thirteen feet. Its lower end is thus, in reality, the edge of the deep bed; hidden by only a few feet of water. The hills on its west shore are of Hippurite[2] limestone; a rock of the chalk

[1] Stanley, *Sinai and Palestine*, p. 285.

[2] Hippurite is the name of an extinct fossil shell, not unlike a straight horn. Some are a foot long; most very small. In South France and in the Alps it forms almost the entire substance of widely spread and very thick rocks. Brockhaus' *Lexicon*, viii. p. 283. Nicholson's *Palæontology*, vol. i. p. 453.

formation, in which, as in Syria, layers of bitumen, fluid and solid, occur; and also, of rock-salt. The whole of the hills, indeed, smell of bitumen, and the chalk marl is so thoroughly impregnated with it at some places that it burns fiercely when kindled. This is especially the case between Engedi and the north-west corner, where the shore is lined with a mass of bitumen in which pebbles of all kinds are thickly imbedded.[1] The eastern shore rests throughout on sandstone, which, however, at some places is pierced by huge veins and beds of volcanic rock.[2] The chalk of the west shore reappears only atop of these two; so complete has been the dislocation or "fault" of the two sides, through primeval earthquakes or other convulsions. A tongue of land formed of the debris brought down from the hills, in the course of ages, by torrents, juts out into the lake for two-thirds of its breadth, on the south-east, and marks the beginning of the shallow water. Terraces of marl, gravel, and silt, about 100 feet above the level of the Mediterranean, show, as I have said, that the level of the Dead Sea at one time stood about 1,400 feet higher than at present, but the waters of the Jordan valley could not have flowed into the Gulf of Akaba, after the land had once emerged from the sea. The discontinuation of the Jordan from the Red Sea must, therefore, date very far back; though at a period coming down, probably, to the prehistoric, a chain of lakes—its last memorials—existed among the valleys and hollows of the Peninsula of Sinai. Palestine and the greater part of the district of Sinai appear to have risen from the ocean in what is known as the Miocene period: the great cleft of the Jordan valley, with its lofty terraces, dating from the same remote age. The terraces in

[1] Tristram, *Land of Israel*, p. 277. [2] Basalt.

the hillsides, one below the other, imply that, for immense periods after this, a rainy climate must have prevailed in these regions, and this also, alone, would account for the great size and depths of many ravines and gorges, now dry, and for the fact that the Dead Sea must once have been two hundred miles long, from north to south, at a time when its level was higher than that of the Mediterranean is now—that is, the Dead Sea must once have risen fourteen hundred feet higher than it does at present. The fact is so curious that I repeat it thus, a third time. This rainy age seems to have extended to recent times. Unmelting snows and glaciers then crowned the heights of Lebanon, and the districts south of them must have had a climate like that of Britain to-day. Moreover, many parts of the country being over two thousand feet above the sea level, there must have been an abundant rainfall, creating an abundant and luxuriant vegetation, which continued till within the epoch of human habitation. The outburst of volcanoes in the Hauran, south of Damascus, in remote ages, was doubtless connected with the fact that the Dead Sea extended as far north as Lake Huleh, which supplied the water necessary for such phenomena.

The Dead Sea has been immemorially a mere reservoir for the waters of the Jordan, and of the mountain torrents which flow into it. The former, alone, discharges into it not less than six million tons of water every twenty-four hours;[1] yet the evaporation, from the direct heat of the sun and the reflected heat of the rocks, keeps the balance comparatively even through the year. In winter, indeed, the surface is two or three yards higher than in summer; but this makes little difference in the extent of the sea,

[1] Fraas, in Riehm, p. 972.

except at its shallow southern end. At that part, Gebel Usdum, a huge mountain of rock-salt, capped by gypsum and marl, about seven miles long, and from one-and-a-half to three miles broad, hollowed out by rains and springs, sends a constant addition of brine to the lake: and this, with that which enters it in other parts, has gradually made it more than six times salter than the open ocean.[1] Hence nothing living can exist in it. The fish carried down by the Jordan at once die, nor can even mussels or corals live in it; but it is a fable that no bird can fly over it, or that there are no living creatures on its banks. Dr. Tristram found on the shores, three kinds of kingfishers, gulls, ducks, and grebes, which, he says, live on the fish which enter the sea in shoals and presently die. He collected one hundred and eighteen species of birds, some new to science, on the shores, or swimming or flying over the waters. The cane-brakes which fringe it at some parts are the homes of about forty species of mammalia, several of them animals unknown in England, and innumerable tropical or semi-tropical plants perfume the atmosphere, wherever fresh water can reach. The climate is perfect, and most delicious, and, indeed, there is, perhaps, no place in the world where a sanatorium could be established with so much prospect of benefit as at Ain Jidi (Engedi). There are many spots near the lake where fresh-water streams flow throughout the year, and where sweet water bubbles up within a few feet of the salt shore. The rich plain of the Safieh, at the south-east corner of the lake, is cultivated for indigo, maize, and barley, to within a few feet of the water's edge, and the date palm still waves over the mouth of the Arnon and Zerka.[2] The

[1] The ocean has 4 per cent. of salt; the Dead Sea, 26¼.

[2] Canon Tristram, *Nat. Hist. of the Bible*, pp. 12, 380.

waters of the lake are, in fact, intensely salt, through the flow into it of rains and springs from the hills of rock-salt at the south end of the lake, and from the saline matter brought into it by the Jordan and its tributaries, which gather it, in their course, from the drainage of their different valleys. All this accumulates age after age, as the great evaporation in a basin so deep below the level of the sea, in a region so far south, carries off the waters in vapour, leaving the salt behind; and thus vast layers of salt must be rising at the bottom of the lake, destined after the lapse of millenniums to fill it up entirely, as is now happening, from the same causes, with the Salt Lake of Utah.[1]

The basin of the Dead Sea is rivalled in its peculiarities by the whole course of the Jordan, "the Descender," which feeds it. In sixty miles, its constant twistings make the actual length two hundred, and for the whole distance it flows far below the surface of the neighbouring country, through a mere fissure torn in the rocks by volcanic force at some remote period. Issuing from Lake Merom at a level of ninety feet above the Mediterranean, it enters the Lake of Galilee at a level of 300 feet below it, and rushes thence, in a gloomy and deep chasm, from ledge to ledge, down twenty-seven rapids till, at the Dead Sea, it is, as has been said, 1,300 feet below the Mediterranean, and 3,000 below the streets of Jerusalem.

The position of the cities of the plain has been much disputed, but, to me, the evidence seems conclusive that they

[1] Canon Tristram, noting that Engedi had as the former name, Hazezon Tamar, implies—groves of palms in Abraham's day, and that these groves were famous even down to the Christian era, says that on breaking through the limestone incrustation of the recesses of the rocks there, he found great masses of perfect palm leaves, and even whole trees, petrified where they had stood. Clumps of date palms still flourish in the small oases on the east shore of the sea. *Nat. Hist. of Bible*, p. 380.

must have stood north of the Dead Sea, in the "circle" in which, afterwards, stood Jericho: but some think the south end of the lake the true spot. They urge that the "Vale of Siddim" is said to have been full of bitumen pits,[1] and that though none are now found around the shallow part of the lake, masses of it rise to the surface after earthquakes,[2] as if the soil of the bottom were still largely impregnated with it. The Bedouins, indeed, who now frequent the springs and pastures on the shores, trade at Jerusalem in the salt of the lake and in the bitumen which they fish out of the waters or pick up on the shores. The fields of Sodom, moreover, were well watered and fruitful as a garden of the Lord; and Robinson tells us that a whole series of permanent brooks and streams flow into the lake at the south end, where the level surface especially favoured irrigation. In summer the southern plateau is covered with only three feet of water and is waded across in all directions, though in winter the depth of the water is thirteen feet. It is argued from this that the plateau may have been dyked off in the days of Sodom, and that its submergence at all rises only from the destruction of these dykes, with perhaps a slight subsidence of the land. It is supposed, moreover,

[1] A series of pits found at different parts on the east side of the north end of the lake - thirty in one case, twenty in another, from three to six feet deep, have erroneously been fancied to be traces of the "bitumen pits" of Genesis. They are, however, only remains of a system of irrigation which must have been used in the district in early antiquity -still employed round Damascus and at least as far east as Afghanistan. A pit is dug on a hillside to collect the rain water from above. From the bottom of this a small tunnel is made for a short distance down; then another collecting pit is dug and a second tunnel dug from its bottom, down the slope: the pit and tunnel being repeated till the stream is led to the plain intended to be irrigated. The pits not only collect water but allow the channel to be cleaned out or repaired, as may from time to time be necessary. The pits on the slopes of the Moabite hills show that this system was in use in these regions in early ages, but they have nothing to do with bitumen.

[2] Canon Tristram says he gathered some very large fragments. *Nat. Hist. of Bible*, p. 24.

that the lake was fresh till the waters overflowed the southern end; but this seems impossible when we remember that ancient beaches, showing its former levels, are found as high as 1,400 feet above its surface.

On the other hand, in support of the view that the cities were to the north of the lake, there is the account of the parting of Abraham and Lot, at the camp of the former, between Bethel and Hai, now represented by Beitum and a mass of ruins called Et Tell. In close proximity to these two places there is, as I have said, a hill from which a commanding view of the plain north of the Dead Sea is obtained, and on which are the foundations of a very old church, possibly marking the site of Abraham's altar. The position of Abraham's camp must, at any rate, have been in the immediate neighbourhood; and as it is hardly possible for any one to read the account without feeling that Abraham and Lot were actually looking down on Sodom and Gomorrah, when "Lot lifted up his eyes and beheld all the plain of Jordan," it follows that those cities must have been situated on some part of the plain north of the Dead Sea and visible from the heights of Bethel. The plain or "circle" of Jordan could not have extended beyond the point where the river enters the Dead Sea, and it is stated that Lot journeyed east, which would have led him far away from the southern end of the sea. The disappearance of all traces of the cities is no doubt owing to their being gradually buried under the waste from the western hills, washed down by the winter torrents, so as gradually to raise the level of the lower plain till it forms a flat expanse of half-consolidated mud. It may be added that, whether the cities were at the north or at the south end, the smoke of their destruction would be visible from the camp

at Mamre, where Abraham was when the catastrophe took place—but if they were at the south, there is no depression of the hills to aid the view, whereas there is a dip in the range towards the north end, over which the smoke would be easily visible. A hill, however, is still pointed out among the many summits near Hebron, as that from which Abraham looked into the deep gulf which parts the mountains of Judæa from those vast, unknown, unvisited ranges, which, with their caves and wide tableland, invited the fugitives from the plain below.[1]

As to the causes of the catastrophe, opinions have been no less divided than on other points. Josephus, expressing, no doubt, the belief of the ancient Jews, ascribes it to lightning,[2] and a striking legend found in the Assyrian mounds seems to favour the idea of a terrible thunderstorm accompanied by a flood.[3]

An overthrow from the midst of the deep[4] there came,
The fated punishment from the midst of heaven descended
A storm, like a plummet, the earth (overwhelmed).
To the four winds the destroying flood burned like fire.
The inhabitants of the cities it caused to be tormented: their bodies it consumed.
Freeman and slave were equal, and the high places it felled.
In heaven and earth like a thunderstorm it had rained: a prey it made.
A place of refuge the gods hastened to, and in a throng collected.
Its mighty (onset) they fled from, and like a garment it concealed (mankind).

[1] Stanley's *Jewish Church*, vol. i. p. 47. Ewald (vol. i. p. 450) thinks the cities stood at the south end of the Dead Sea, and attributes their overthrow to an earthquake. The name Usdum certainly sounds like Sodom. But Canon Tristram's arguments, stated at length in *The Land of Israel*, p. 364, seem to make it certain that the doomed cities were at the north end.

[2] *Bell. Jud.*, iv. 8, 4.

[3] *Records of the Past*, vol. xi. p. 117. Translated by Prof. Sayce.

[4] Deep = the abyss of the firmament—the waters above it. Sayce.

They (feared) and death (overtook them)
Their feet and hands (it embraced)
Their body it consumed.

On the other hand, a writer so calm and scientific as Furrer[1] thinks that an earthquake was the especial cause. "In the vicinity of the whole region," says Fraas,[2] also, "along the line of such a deep chasm, subterranean movements are constant, and necessarily lead to changes of the level of land and water, that is, to volcanic appearances in the widest sense of the word, which produce frightful earthquakes. Thus Tiberias was destroyed by one so lately as 1837. The Dead Sea is not volcanic in the strict sense, as is shown by the regularity of the strata of limestone, though pieces of brimstone of the size of walnuts are found on the shores at some places, and though there are strong hot springs at various points on the east side, one of them, at least, smelling strongly of sulphur." But the presence of lava at many places near the Sea of Galilee, and in the Ledja; with the wild irruptions of volcanic rocks on the east side of the Jordan and of the Dead Sea itself, are enough to show that forces lie hidden beneath, which at any time may show themselves. The Bible account is very simple and striking. "The Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire out of heaven, and overthrew them and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground." This seems to imply a terrible storm of lightning and tempest; but we may well suppose that an earthquake added its terrors. Fire from above might kindle the layers of asphalt with which the plain abounded,[3]

[1] Schenkel's *Bibel Lex.*, vol. iv. p. 155. [2] *Aus dem Orient* (1867), p. 78.
[3] Tristram, *Nat. Hist. of Bible*, p. 25.

and tremblings of the ground might aid the storm-flood in overwhelming everything. There is no geological reason against believing the shallow part of the lake a result of the catastrophe, for a slight subsidence of the ground, such as often happens elsewhere, would at once submerge it. The whole district, in fact, before the terrible visitation, must have been very like that of Baku on the Caspian Sea; where numerous fissures in the earth pour out liquid bitumen, while others give off inflammable gas which burns permanently when lighted—some parts, indeed, so freely, that it is only necessary to insert a pipe in the earth, and set fire to it above, to have light and heat forthwith.[1] No wonder that when Abraham, in the morning after the awful night, looked toward the once smiling valley, "the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace." Yet the outburst of volcanic violence must have been very limited, for Zoar, which was "near," was untouched, and Abraham at Mamre, not twenty miles off in a straight line, neither heard nor saw anything till next morning. There are no ruins at the south end of the Dead Sea, but at its northern end there are mounds covering, apparently, the remains of various towns. These "tells" or ruined heaps may hide the wreck of the doomed cities of the plain. One could wish they were opened and explored. Mr. Drake thought they marked the site of strongholds, in many cases, their sides being so steep. The rubbish, he calculated, would, in some instances, be equal to at least 10,000 tons. They always have water near them and are often at the mouths of passes.

The reward of Abraham's lofty trust in God might have seemed complete on the birth of his long-promised heir—

[1] Rosenmüller's *Das Morgenland*. Dillmann's *Genesis*, p. 251.

Isaac—twenty-five years after the migration from Haran; when all hope of such a blessing seemed past. But the fine gold was to be tried once more, to prove its quality beyond a question. He had gone out not knowing whither, at God's call; he had lived as a stranger in Canaan, believing the promise that it would hereafter be his inheritance, while as yet he had no child; year after year his trust had been unshaken, though realization of his hopes seemed humanly impossible. But a son had at last been given him in his old age, and had grown up to youth, in visible fulfilment of the long-delayed assurance. The ideal of faith had not, however, yet been reached; there might be something still wanting of absolute, unconditional obedience to God's will: some compliance too great to be demanded. The nations round thought nothing too sacred or beloved to keep back from their idols; was Abraham capable of equal self-sacrifice?

From the earliest ages the desire to please the Divine Being had led men to carry to extremes the institution of sacrifice, originally, in all likelihood, appointed by God Himself. From offering lambs and oxen they had gradually reasoned themselves into the hideous thought that the more precious the offering the greater its acceptableness, and had thus introduced the practice of presenting human victims. The old Accadians, that is, the early Turanian inhabitants of Chaldæa, had already adopted it, long before Abraham.[1]

"In the month Sivan," says an old Accadian inscription, "from the first day to the thirtieth, an eclipse failed (and) the crops of the land were not prosperous. When the God of the air (the atmosphere) is fine, (then there

[1] *Trans. Soc. Bib. Arch.*, vol. iv. p. 25.

is) prosperity. On the high places the son is burnt." In another the chief prophet is to declare that "the father must give the life of his child for the sin of his own soul: the child's head for his head: the child's neck for his neck: the child's breast for his breast." The Canaanite races, at least those of Cushite origin, not to be behind the earlier people, had adopted from them this terrible rite, and had

HUMAN SACRIFICE. FROM "L'EGYPTE—ANTIQUITÉS."

brought it with them from the Euphrates to Palestine. To make their "children pass through the fire," "to offer up their sons and their daughters;" and "to give their first-born for their transgressions; the fruit of their body for the sin of their soul," had become, we know not how early, a dreadful characteristic of their religion. On the altars of Ammon and Moab, of Egypt and of Phœnicia, as afterwards on those of the distant Punic settlements in Carthage and Spain, the highest expression of the spirit of sacrifice found satisfaction only in the burning alive of chil-

dren by their parents. Nor was the awful custom without its dark influence even on the chosen people, as in the fate of Jephthah's daughter, the sacrifice of Saul's sons at Gibeah, and the terrible scenes in the valley of Hinnom, under the walls of Jerusalem, where, in the days of Ahaz and Manasseh, it became for a time established.[1]

The final and crowning trial, which was to test whether the self-surrender of the patriarch was equal to such sacrifices as the nations round made to their idols, came to him in his tents at Be-ersheba[2]—a camping place on the pastoral uplands of the south country, twelve hours south-west of Hebron, and thus on the extreme limits of Palestine. Three wells, a short distance apart, still mark the spot; two filled with water; the other, dry: the largest 12 feet across, and over 45 deep; lined, for 28 feet from the surface, with masonry, which, however, as shown by an Arabic inscription built into it, dates only from the eleventh century; the second well five feet across and forty feet deep. The top is now worn into deep ruts by the ropes used through hundreds of years, for drawing the clear and delicious water, for camels, herds, and flocks, as well as for the use of man. Round the well stand stone troughs of great age, to assist in the supply of the thirsty cattle.[3] There is no protection round them, as there is none round the deep wells at Bethlehem, so that they are dangerous to one unacquainted with the ground. They are on the edge of a wady, or ravine, forming a water-course after the

1 2 Kings xxiii. 10. 2 Chron. xxviii. 3; xxxiii. 6.

2 "The Well of the Oath." It may also be translated, "The Well of the Seven (Lambs)," but the idea is the same; for the seven lambs were the offerings to confirm, as with an oath, the agreement made. To "seventh it" was the expression for swearing an oath. Michaelis, vol. vi. p. 147.

3 Sepp, *Das Heilige Land*, vol. i. p. 637.

rains; the breadth of the wady being about 300 paces. The bottom of it is filled with stones of all sizes, brought down by floods. Low hills on its northern side show traces of ruins, marking the site of a small town, for there was once a Roman outpost at Be-ersheba, and a considerable population. Signs of dwellings are scattered for a half-mile along the edge of the wady, and half that distance back from it. Be-ersheba was given to Judah at the Conquest, but it passed over to the tribe of Simeon, afterwards, and formed the most southern point of the Hebrew territory; "from Dan to Be-ersheba," marking the greatest length of their country. After the setting up of the northern kingdom, under Jeroboam, the territory of Judah extended from Be-ersheba to the hills of Ephraim. A court was held at it, under Samuel. A queen, the mother of Jehoash—by name Zibiah—came from this far-away spot. A century later, Be-ersheba had become, with Bethel and Gilgal, a place of idolatrous pilgrimage, denounced by Amos. It was here, also, that Elijah, fleeing from Jezebel, left his attendant, and passed on towards Sinai, over the desert. I should add that Be-ersheba was deserted during the Captivity, but became once more a Jewish settlement after the Return. The country round it is an undulating plain, cut up by water-courses, dry except after storms, but the whole landscape is gay with grass and flowers, in spring, though bare and scorched in summer. Not far from Be-ersheba, Palmer found some of the old houses common in the district of Sinai—round, like beehives. He also found some acacia beams, though no trees exist now. Grain pits also are to be seen. Thousands of goats, cattle, and camels, pasture around in spring, belonging to Arab encampments; for the peasants own nothing. Patches of soil are scratched

with the light plough, and sown with grain or other crops every third year; lying fallow for the other two.[1] The grove planted by the patriarch, not of ilex or terebinth, which never descend into these wild plains, but of the light feathery tamarisk, the first and the last tree which the traveller sees on his passage through the desert, and thus

BE-ERSHEBA.

From Palmer's "Desert of the Exodus," by permission.

the appropriate growth of the spot, has long since vanished, but it was from beneath its growing and delightful shade that he and Isaac set forth on their sad journey.

The scene of Abraham's trial is spoken of as "the land

[1] The texts bearing on Be-ersheba are Gen. xxi. 28, 29; xxvi. 33. Josh. xv. 28; xix. 2. Judg. xx. 1. 2 Chron. xxx. 5; xix. 4. 1 Sam. viii. 2. 2 Kings xii. 1. Amos v. 4, 5; viii. 14. Neh. xi. 30. 1 Kings xix. 4, 5.

of Moriah," an expression which has given rise to great dispute, for the only Moriah known is the hill which Solomon afterwards consecrated as the site of the temple, and it is not elsewhere used as a name for any district round. Jerusalem, moreover, has been thought too near Be-ersheba to suit the description of the journey as one of three days. It has hence been thought that a spot near Shechem, the place consecrated by the first altar Abraham raised in Canaan, is meant.[1] It is urged that there is no mention in Genesis of a Mount Moriah, and that the only place besides the present in which the name occurs is in the book of Chronicles, which is confessedly of a later date.[2] Of Moreh, at Shechem, on the other hand, it is said that we read in Judges of the Hill of Moreh,[3] that is, "the Teacher," and of its oak or oaks, under the broad shade of which Abraham first pitched his tent,[4] and built an altar, and where he was favoured by a vision of Jehovah. In the Samaritan Pentateuch it is spelled Moriah, while the Greek version translates it "the high land," from an etymology implying "lofty," or "exalted." Among all ancient interpreters, moreover, Mount Moriah at Jerusalem finds favour only with the Jerusalem Targum, which naturally sought to glorify the temple hill.

Yet not a few cling to the belief that this opinion is right. There, it is said, Abraham had exhibited his great deed of faith and obedience, there his only offering was presented of which we have a record, though he built various other altars. Thus, it is urged, the sacred hill where the Cove-

[1] See the argument for this stated at length by Bleek, in *Studien und Kritiken* (1831). Major Conder seems to favour Bleek's view. "The temple hill," he says, "is not visible until within a half-mile of it; Gerizim is seen 'afar off' from the maritime plain, within fifty miles of Be-ersheba." *Pal. Explor. Fund Rep.* (July, 1880), p. 173.

[2] 2 Chron. iii. 1. [3] Judg. vii. 1. [4] Gen. xii. 6. Deut. xi. 30.

nant God was afterwards to dwell, and where alone His people could present their offerings, received its consecration, already, in Abraham's time.[1] Canon Tristram, indeed, appears to settle the question by the stubborn evidence of the distances of Gerizim, or Moreh, and Moriah, from Be-ersheba, respectively. "Travelling at the ordinary rate of the country," says he, "Jerusalem would just be reached on the third day (as required by this narrative) from Beersheba; to reach Nablous (Moreh) in the same time *is impossible*, at the pace of fellahîn with their asses."[2]

The terrible drama was permitted to continue till the proof was complete and triumphant, that the patriarch's faith was equal to any strain, and that nothing could shake his trust in the Divine word, even should it be necessary, as the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews expresses it, that "God should raise up Isaac from the dead."[3] But, before the literal victim could be offered, the true purpose and spirit of the trial were shown, in the final and fatal act being arrested. Abraham's unconditional submission, and his readiness to complete the sacrifice, were accepted instead. Henceforth it was proved that the lonely follower of Jehovah was not behind the servants of Chemosh or Baal in self-surrender to his God. But it was also taught that, while the God of Abraham had a right to demand even such a sacrifice as that of an only son, a limit was fixed to the impulse in man to offer his costliest and best, and a sacredness stamped on human life. The highest devotion authorized was to be symbolized only by the offering of lower creatures, not of

[1] "Abram." Riehm's *Handwörterbuch*. Gesenius also thinks it was Moriah, quoting Josephus, *Ant.*, i. 13, 1. He gives the etymology of Moriah, adopted by the sacred writers, as "Mori Jah," the chosen of God. Compare 2 Chron. iii. 1, which Gesenius translates, the hill Moriah, which was pointed out to David (in a vision). *Thes.*, p. 1246.

[2] *Land of Israel*, p. 154.

[3] Heb. xi. 19.

human beings; the life of the creature being regarded as accepted instead of that of the offerer. Thus, the solemn lesson was taught, no less vividly than before, that sacrifice was no mere outward act, but an awful confession of guilt and exposure to wrath, as well as an atonement or expiation. On the one hand the great principle was proclaimed that the sacrifice of self was the highest and holiest offering that God can accept; and on the other, the inhuman sacrifices, towards which the ancient ceremonial was perpetually tending, were condemned, and cast out of the true worship of the Church for ever.[1]

His son given back to him, as if from the dead, the spot became memorable, not to the patriarch alone, but to all ages, as the scene of a great lesson. Henceforth the name Jehovah Jireh was given to it—the Lord will provide—but to this the sacred author appends a Jewish proverb, which illustrates, in the variety of interpretations given it, the difficulty of understanding fully the sententious expressions of remote antiquity. "In the mountain the Lord will provide," that is, "as He had pity on Abraham, so He will have pity on us," says Dean Stanley. "In the mountain of the Lord He appeareth," say Tuch and Delitzsch. "On the mountain, where Jehovah appeareth, let us praise Him," says Ewald. "On the mountain of the Lord one shall be seen as a worshipper," says Kalisch. "On Mount Moriah God provides for men and sends them help; as He of old did to Abraham, so He does to us now," says Gesenius.[2]

[1] Stanley's *Jewish Church*, p. 49. Rev. F. W. Robertson (*Notes on Genesis*, p. 55) remarks: "Abraham lived in a country where human sacrifices were common; he lived in a day when a father's power over a son's life was absolute. He was familiar with the idea, and just as familiarity with *slavery* makes it less horrible, so familiarity with this, as an established and conscientious mode of worshipping God, removed from Abraham much of the horror *we* should feel."

[2] Ges., *Thes.*, p. 1246.

It is striking to notice the echoes of this great event in ancient heathenism. Among the Phœnicians it was told how Israel, king of the country, having an only son, whose mother's name was Anobret, "the Hebrew Fountain," on occasion of a great national calamity, adorned him royally and sacrificed him on an altar which he had prepared.[1] Among the Greeks Agamemnon prepares to sacrifice his daughter Iphigenia; who, however, is delivered at the last moment by the goddess Diana providing, in her stead, a hind.[2]

From the scene of this great victory of trust in God, Abraham returned to his camping place at Be-ersheba; in after times, from being the last inhabited spot on the edge of the desert, regarded as the southern frontier of his descendants. Why he should have left Hebron is only matter for conjecture. It may have been to be nearer his flocks and herds, to which the wells of Be-ersheba offered the priceless advantage, in these wild regions, of abundant water, while the wide range of undulating plain round it, and the hill-country behind, offered special attractions to a shepherd chief. Or, can it have been that he might be nearer Ishmael, his first-born son, thrust out from his father's home by the imperious bearing of "the princess" of the tribe; who would brook no rival to Isaac in her presence? Or, was it the revival in Abraham, in his old age, of the Bedouin love of the open desert, far from the haunts of men? In any case, Be-ersheba continued for many years the centre of patriarchal life, for Isaac lingered near it long after his father's death,[3] and Jacob returned to it after his exile.

[1] Kenrick's *Phœnicia*, p. 228.
[2] Euripid., *Iph. Aul.*, 783.
[3] Gen. xxvi. 23.

Thirty-seven years had passed since the birth of Isaac,[1] and Sarah had attained the great age of a hundred and twenty-seven, when death overtook her at Hebron,[2] apparently while the patriarch was for the time away at Be-er-sheba, among his flocks, perhaps little dreading such a calamity. It would seem, indeed, as if part of the tribe still remained there, Be-ersheba being, as it were, an outpost in the midst of the desert pastures, which Abraham occasionally visited. Nothing could be more touching in its simplicity or more true to the age, than the picture of his bearing under his new trial, and of the incident attending the burial of the dead. He comes at once to "mourn for Sarah and to weep for her," prostrating himself in his grief before the lifeless form long so dear. But the hot climate necessitated speedy interment, and he therefore "stands up from before his dead," and summons the men of the town; which it appears was a little republic, managing its affairs by representative elders; to buy from them in perpetuity, a resting-place for his wife and afterwards for himself. A small off-shoot from the great Hittite race, whose empire, at one time or other, stretched from the Euphrates to Ionia, we can picture to ourselves the group who, in Eastern fashion, met Abraham outside the town gate,[3] beardless, like Tartars, with high caps and long pigtails, such as the Chinese now wear; their boots curled up at the toes; their complexions light red, and their features with high Mon-

[1] Compare Gen. xvii. 17, and xxiii. 1. Isaac's marriage took place three years after Sarah's death. Gen. xxv. 20.

[2] The name of Hebron is given in this passage as Kiriath Arba. But Arba is the Accadian numeral, four; and, as the Accadian and Babylonian gods had numerical symbols, it is thought that the god Sarru-ikdu, whose number was four, may have been intended by it as applied to Hebron, which would thus mean "the city of Sarra-ikdu." The habitual concealment of the Divine name in the East, and the fact that there are various cities called Arba, seems to favour this interpretation.

[3] Gen. xxiii. 18.

golian cheek-bones, small noses, and small eyes. We have pictures of them still on the walls adorned by Rameses II. with the story of his Syrian campaigns. Compliments pass, in oriental style. Abraham is made welcome, as a great man, to choose any of their sepulchres;[1] a gracious, though perhaps only a formal courtesy, which Abraham acknowledges, like an Arab, by bowing low. But he is too much a man of the world to leave such a matter so loosely: and, in strictly Eastern fashion, which transacts even a marriage through third parties, asks their mediation with the owner for the legal purchase of the cave of Machpelah and the field in which it stood. These, in the end, he formally buys for four hundred silver shekels, duly weighed out; as money still is in China, and as it was till lately in India, to secure its being due weight,[2] and thus current

[1] An Arab gives his house, field, horse, to-day as in Abraham's time, to an intending buyer, and appeals to witnesses that he does so. But it is none the less known that this is only a form to help him to raise the price in the end. "What is that between me and thee?" is still a standing phrase on such occasions, as it was 4,000 years ago. When I was riding near Gerar a fine-looking Arab came up, seated on a camel. His complexion was quite black, but his features were very handsome. His long white beard, for he was old, hung down over a brown striped abba or overgarment, which covered his inner dress of cotton. A white head-cloth, formed by doubling a kerchief diagonally, was held in its place by a soft camel's-hair rope, passing twice round his head, the corners hanging down his back and breast. He had a sword and pistol at his side and in his girdle, but his most striking weapon was a twelve-feet-long spear, with a heavy iron head, set off by a tuft of coloured wool: a long iron butt, sharp-pointed, forming the other end, to stick the weapon into the ground, when not in use. I asked to look at the spear, and he at once handed the great heavy thing to me, saying, as he did so, "I give it you," but this was a mere formal act of politeness, exactly like that of the Hebron land-owner offering Abraham a grave for nothing. In both cases nothing was really meant. Returning him the dreadful weapon, therefore, with thanks, I rode off one way; he, the other. Abraham would bow till his head almost touched the ground, for this is still the Eastern habit in similar cases.

[2] To weigh money was a Chaldæan as well as a Canaanite custom. The very words are the same in Assyrian and Hebrew. Shekel = sicle = weight; as pondus = weight = pound. Rawlinson's *Cuneiform Inscriptions*, vol. ii. p. 113. Among the Hebrews 3,600 *shekels* made a *Mina*: among the Assyrians, 3,000; 60 *Mina* made a talent. A shekel seems to have weighed about 220 grains Troy, and there are 480 grains to

with the traders of the town. All this, moreover, is done in public, before the gate, that the attestation of eye-witnesses may not be wanting; written documents not being as yet in use, in these parts, in such cases.[1]

The cave thus bought, four thousand years ago, lies on the east end of Hebron, where an ancient Christian church, built over it, is now turned into a mosque, which the Turks guard sacredly against any intrusion. Even the Crown Prince of Germany and the Prince of Wales could gain entrance only to the upper story, where there is next to nothing to see; the cave lying underneath, hidden from all eyes. The mosque is a right-angled building, about 200 feet long by 111 broad, and consists, in its lower part, of gigantic marble-like bevelled stones, some of them 12 feet long and 5 feet in breadth; one, indeed, being no less than 24 feet 8 inches in length. This portion is the most ancient and the finest relic left us of Jewish architecture; for it dates from the early Jewish ages, and remains a proof of the jealous care taken by the Hebrews of the graves of their venerated fathers.[2] The cave itself, as its name tells us, is double,[3] one rising over the other, divided by an artificial floor; the upper one alone being ever entered, and that only by the chief minister of the mosque, for prayer, in any time of special public calamity. The walls, built of hard grey limestone, are strengthened by buttresses, their thickness, apart from these, being eight and a half feet. The

the ounce; so that a shekel weighed nearly four-tenths of an ounce, or about two-fifths. If therefore silver be taken at 5*s.* an ounce, the shekel would be worth, at the present price of money, 2*s.*

[1] All the men of the place gather round contracting parties at the gate of an Eastern town or village, the usual place of assembling, and take part in the transaction, finally acting as witnesses to it. A bargain thus confirmed is indisputable.

[2] Furrer's *Palästina*, p. 86. *Land and Book*, p. 580.

[3] Machpelah = double. M. Pierroti has proved that it is really a double cave.

building is enclosed by an Arab wall, on three sides, about fifteen feet high : the height of the mosque wall being about forty feet. A modern addition, with battlements, has been built on the original wall, running back into the hill, on a level with a modern pavement, which marks its connection with the ancient stone-work. I was led up to this, by a filthy lane, and was admitted by the only door in the wall, that I might look more closely at the grand old wall within, but I was not allowed to touch it, or even to go, more than a step or two forward, inside.

The front entrance to the mosque is by a broad flight of steps, which, in my forgetfulness, I essayed to ascend, but only to be turned back at once. I could, therefore, only content myself with looking at a hole in the wall, beside the steps, through which Jews are allowed to thrust pieces of paper on which their names are written, in the hope that Abraham may take pity on the writers, and intercede for them with God. When the Prince of Wales was admitted to see the mock shrines, on the mosque floor, over the cave, the chief of the forty guardians of the building first prayed to the patriarch, "O friend of God, forgive this intrusion." The wall of the mosque is Herodian at latest, and may be much older.

The outside steps, from which I was ignominiously sent off, lead up to a floor above the level of the caves, and on this are raised empty tombs, as monuments to the illustrious dead who lie far below. Each is enclosed within a separate chapel or shrine, closed with gates or railings ; those of the tombs of Abraham and Sarah, of silver. The shrine of Abraham is cased in marble, and contains a so-called tomb, raised about six feet high, and hung with three carpets, embroidered with gold. The "tombs" of Isaac, Rebekah,

Jacob, and Leah are also shown, but are much like that of Abraham, though less rich. No men are permitted to enter the "tombs" of the women.[1]

Only one European, Pierroti, an Italian architect in the service of the Sultan, has ever seen more than the floor of the upper chamber, with its six tawdry erections, placed there in accordance with a practice usual in Mohammedan sepulchres. Pierroti, daringly pressing after the chief Santon or priest of the mosque, when he was entering the lower story on a special occasion, found the entry was by a horizontal door in the porch. First a carpet, then a grated iron door, was lifted; after which a narrow stair appeared, cut in the rock. Undeterred by blows and violence, he managed to descend this far enough to see into the lower cavern in a northern direction, and to notice sarcophagi of white stone; the true tombs of some of the illustrious dead, in striking corroboration of the statement of Josephus, that they were of fair marble, exquisitely wrought.[2] There can be little doubt, indeed, that the remains of the three generations of patriarchs and their wives, Rachel excepted, still lie safely in this their venerable sepulchre.

Abraham, now left alone, was fast becoming a very old man, for he was a hundred and thirty-seven when Sarah died; and it was all-important to get a fitting wife for Isaac, that heirs to the promise, nine times confirmed by God, should not fail. Slowly but surely everything had hitherto helped on its fulfilment—the separation of the patriarch from his father's house and from idolatry; the

[1] Stanley's *Jewish Church*, vol. i. p. 495. Rosen, *Die Patriarchengruft zu Hebron*, passim. Guerin, *Description de la Palestine*, vol iii. pp. 214–256.

[2] Pierroti, *Machpela* (Lausanne, 1869), p. 93. Jos., *Ant.*, i. 14.

seal of circumcision, setting him and his for ever apart from the nations around; the birth of Isaac; the sending away of Ishmael. Isaac was clearly the chosen of God, but it was all-important that his future wife should be of his father's stock,[1] and not an idolatrous Canaanite, and no less so that he should not leave the country which God had given him as an inheritance.

Calling therefore his head slave, the most confidential of his servants—perhaps Eliezer—he tells him all his mind, and commissions him to set out for Mesopotamia, "Aram of the two rivers," to the old home of the tribe, to seek a bride; but first requires him to swear an oath with a form used by Jacob long afterwards[2] and still common among Arabs, to act strictly according to his master's commands. It seems as if Abraham had not expected to live till his return, for he gives him full power to carry out the whole matter in every detail.

Taking ten camels, for himself and those who went with him; for the necessaries of the road, the gifts to be presented, and the use of the bride on the return; the trusty messenger sped forthwith on his long journey, past Damascus, then east to the Euphrates, and south to Haran, "the city of Nahor." There, Arab like, he makes his camels kneel outside the town, beside the spring always found close to Eastern cities or encampments, and, indeed, fixing their locality; and waits, for it is towards evening, till the women and maidens come out, as they still do, to draw water overnight for their household needs.

[1] They always marry in their own tribe, not allowing any member of it to marry into another. Seetzen, *Reisen durch Syrien*, vol. iii. p. 22.

[2] Gen. xlvii. 29. The meaning of this form has been much discussed, but the best explanation seems to be that it had reference to an implied responsibility to posterity for the fulfilment of the oath. Buxtorf's *Lex. Tal.*, p. 680.

Devout, as became the servant of such a master, he commits the whole matter to God, praying that the courtesy of the appointed damsel might be the providential hint to guide him. Presently the daughters and the wives of the town gather round the well, and among them a maiden fair to see, her pitcher on her shoulder, as was still long afterwards the custom with the Hebrews, and as is universal with Arab women still. A friendly request for some water receives her kindly answer, and even an offer to draw water for the camels as well; for the daughters even of sheiks were wont to do this office for their father's flocks and beasts, as in the case of Jethro's daughters in Midian. The sign that had been asked seems granted; the appointed one must be before him. Taking a golden nose-ring and two golden armlets, he puts them on her, in acknowledgment of her politeness, asking her parentage, and whether he can lodge at her father's. Then comes the intimation that she is Nahor's grand-daughter, and, thus, directly of Abraham's kindred, and with this, the assurances of entertainment as wished, for both himself and his camels. Hastening home to the women's part of the house, she shows the golden gifts and tells the story, in the hearing of her brother Laban. Always keen and grasping, the sight of gold quickens his hospitality, and running to the well, he presses the stranger to return with him. He had prepared the house, he said, and made room near it for the camels.

The great beasts having been duly unloaded, after they had kneeled down, have some tebben, or straw broken in threshing, put before them, perhaps mixed with some barley; and then water is provided for the washing of the stranger's feet and those of his men—a first duty of hospitality where, sandals only being worn, the heat and dust

make such refreshment unspeakably grateful. Food is then set before him. But he cannot taste it till his errand is told. From politeness he had not been asked either respecting himself or his master. Now, however, he repeats all that Abraham had said to him, word by word, adding that the damsel who had acted so courteously to him at the well was assuredly the bride intended by God for Isaac, and concludes by a direct and business-like request to know whether he might have her for him. Rebekah herself is not consulted, for, in the East, the consent of the maiden is never sought; her marriage is settled by others for her. Father and mother must agree to the betrothal, but it is also necessary that Laban sanction it;[1] for daughters cannot be married among Arab tribes, even now, except with the approval of their brothers, and Laban was not the man to stand back in a matter involving money. Bethuel, the father, keeps in the background, therefore, throughout, leaving his eager, pushing son to settle the matter; but both parents forthwith give a ready consent to the match. "Behold, Rebekah is before thee, take her, and go, and let her be thy master's son's wife, as the Lord hath spoken." The whole transaction was thus settled within perhaps an hour of the arrival at Haran. The sight of the ten camels, and of the golden presents for so slight a courtesy as Rebekah had shown, were arguments too strong with covetous Arabs to admit of hesitation in the answer.

Thanking God once more, with lowly prostration on the earth, nothing now remained but to seal the betrothal by the customary gifts to the bride elect, and by paying the

[1] Gen. xxxiv. 11. When the father lived in polygamy, full brothers had great authority in reference to their full sisters; more even than their father. The case of Dinah at Shechem further illustrates this. Michaelis, *Mos. Recht*, vol. ii. p. 93.

purchase price for her to her brother and mother. Forthwith, therefore, gold and silver ornaments, so dear to maidens, and costly clothes, are brought out and handed to Rebekah, as from her future husband; for such gifts were demanded by custom from bridegrooms on their betrothal, to make the agreement binding. To Laban and his mother equally precious gifts are also presented, as the price paid for the maiden, and all is arranged without Rebekah being consulted. Nothing remains but to take her to her future distant home.

Eager to carry back the news of his success, the faithful envoy next morning presses for leave to set out on his return. But the whole matter is only a few hours old; will he not stay a few days, to let the bride bid farewell to her father's house? It is left to Rebekah herself to decide; and she, cold and strong-willed, eager to enter on the new life which glittered before her, only too readily agrees to leave at once. An Arab wife has no outfit, for her husband provides all she needs, and so she mounts her camel forthwith, and leaves her father's house for ever, with the stranger whom she had first met only overnight. Yet she must start in a way befitting the daughter of a wealthy sheik. Her nurse, still an Arab woman's companion and cherished friend, must go with her, and she must take some slave-girls also, as her dowry. Thus accompanied, the camel specially brought from Be-ersheba for her use, and doubtless provided with a bridal canopy in gaudy Eastern fashion, bears her off; and she moves away amidst good wishes, culminating in the dearest to an Eastern woman's heart, that she may be the mother of countless descendants, who should hold the gates—that is, the towns—of their vanquished enemies.

Isaac, now forty years of age, always gentle, had apparently remained unmarried till now, to please his mother, with whom he had lived till her death. Still feeling her loss, over three years before, he had gone out to the open downs near his father's tents, in the cool evening; perhaps in a meditative mood, perhaps only to look after his men and his flocks. It was in the neighbourhood of the spring, called, long years before, by Hagar, Lahai roi, "the Spring of the Living One who sees me,"[1] for a camp was always, as I have said, near a supply of water. Suddenly Rebekah appears in the distance, and, as she comes near, alights from her camel on seeing a man, as custom still demands in the East, to do him reverence. But the stranger is no other than Isaac, and she veils her face as she learns the fact; for the husband must not see his bride till they are finally alone. The servant's story reveals the rest, and the tent of Sarah, now long without a mistress, receives a new one; Isaac's wife.

From the marriage of Abraham with Keturah in his old age, there sprang, we are told, six sons, who became the fathers of as many Arab tribes. But, like Ishmael, these possible rivals of Isaac were not allowed to remain with the heir of the great promise; receiving gifts from their father, they were sent away to the open lands which invited them on the east. No more is recorded of the patriarch but his death, and his burial beside Sarah in the cave of Machpelah; Isaac and his peaceful shepherds, joining with Ishmael and his warlike followers from the desert, after long separation, as chief mourners, both equally honouring their common father.

Abraham's character merits the tribute paid it in all

[1] Gen. xvi. 14.

ages. Its strength is seen in the choice of Jehovah as his God when all around were idolators, and in his grand loyalty to Him amidst every temptation. Neither disappointment, nor delay, nor the strain of the sternest demands, for a moment shook his faith. Knowing Him in whom he believed, he trusted Him with an immovable confidence. Nor was his bearing less worthy towards his fellow men. Though the elder, he gives the choice to Lot when the two must part; willing, for peace and kindliness, to take contentedly what his nephew leaves. He is too magnanimous to claim the spoil which war had made his, after the defeat of the kings, but renders the great service freely, without reward. If Hagar and Ishmael live ill at ease with Sarah, they have no such feeling towards him; for they knew how unwilling he had been to send them away, and must have seen how the heart clung to them, which broke out in the fatherly prayer, "O that Ishmael might live before thee!" The pity even for the unworthy that marks his intercession for Sodom is a lesson for every age. His bearing to the three mysterious strangers under the oaks of Mamre is the ideal of patriarchal courtesy and hospitality. He runs to meet them, and bowing low, begs them to let him entertain them, and himself hastens the meal.[1] That he should have maintained relations so

[1] Each part in this picture is true to Arab life. The washing of the feet is the first act of politeness shown to guests, and indeed was so even in ancient Greek life (*Odyss.*, vi. 207), and is still so among the Hindoos. Bread is prepared each day by fire, on a rock till it is heated enough to bake in a few minutes the thin cakes in use, or on an iron plate, or on a fire of wood or dried camel's dung. The greatest sheik thinks it no dishonour himself to run to the herd for a lamb for his guests, and to kill it with his own hands, while his wife is kindling the fire and preparing to make the meal ready. As to the quickness with which the slain calf was cooked, Arabs and all Eastern peoples constantly cook the creatures they have killed for food, immediately after death; the hot climate requiring this. See Rosenmüller's *A. und N. Morgenland*, vol. i. p. 71. Hanna, in *Bib. Educator*, vol. i. p. 42. Vigouroux, vol. i. p. 437. *Land and Book*, p. 446.

friendly with the races among whom he lived at Shechem, Bethel, and Hebron, speaks for his prudence, integrity, and neighbourly worth. No wonder that his descendants, regarding him at once in his relations to God and to his fellow men, should speak of him as "incomparable in his generation," or that they have fabled of him, that, in Jeremiah's day, when the temple had been destroyed, Abraham's form was seen over the ruins, his hands uplifted, pleading with God for the sons of his people led off to captivity.[1]

[1] Beer's *Leben Abraham*, p. 88.

CHAPTER XVIII.

ISAAC AND HIS SONS.

It is strange to think what a great part the descendants of the Chaldæan shepherd, Terah, have played in the history of the world. Those of Nahor gradually formed a great kingdom which only passed away before the rising power of Syria and the fierce attacks of Edom.[1] The twelve tribes, sprung from Ishmael, scattered themselves over the vast pasture and desert regions of Arabia, Syria, Mesopotamia, the shores of the Persian Gulf, and the east of the Jordan. The sons of Keturah, in the same way, grew into similar tribes, to whom the desert solitudes have ever since been the chosen home. The Arab race, indeed, over the world, are the posterity of Nahor and Abraham. Nor have they been without their great part on the stage of the world, for it is to an Arab that more than 200,000,000 of men look to-day as the great prophet of God, and the empire they founded in the first days of Mohammedanism stretched from India to the Straits of Gibraltar, and by its culture and civilization prepared the way for the revival of Letters in Western Europe.

But the supreme interest of mankind centres in the Hebrew, not in the Arab, descendants of Abraham.

Isaac, his heir, is at once a counterpart of his great father in simple devoutness and purity of life, and a contrast in

[1] Ewald, vol. i. p. 445.

his passive weakness of character; which, in part at least, may have sprung from his relations to his mother and wife. After the expulsion of Ishmael and Hagar, Isaac had no competitor, and grew up in the shade of Sarah's tent, moulded into feminine softness by habitual submission to her strong, loving will. It is quite in keeping with such a history that Isaac mourned her for years after her death, and was diverted from his grief only by his marriage. No sorrow in the East is greater than that of a son for his mother: and Isaac, an only child, clung to his with all the tenderness of a soft and dependent nature.

The choice of Rebekah as his wife was dictated at once by the desire of the Arab race to keep the blood of their tribe pure, and by Abraham's determination to separate his posterity, as the chosen people of God, from the idolatrous Canaanites. But she can hardly be regarded as an amiable woman. When we first see her she is ready to leave her father's house for ever at an hour's notice, and her future life showed not only a full share of her brother's duplicity, but the grave fault of partiality in her relations to her children, and a strong will which soon controlled the gentler nature of her husband. Married at the age of forty, Isaac presently surrendered himself to her influence, as he had hitherto done to that of his parents. Her name, "the Enchainer,"[1] may, indeed, have been a tribute to her charms, but it equally expressed her relations to her husband. Wholly devoted to her, in an age when Abraham and Jacob alike had concubines, and notwithstanding her childlessness for twenty years, the pair have always been the Hebrew ideal of chaste married life.

No career could have been more uneventful than Isaac's;

[1] Literally, "the noosed cord," *i.e.*, the man-catcher.

but it shows, at least, that a path of modest retirement may honour God as much as one of prominent action. So quiet and unenergetic, that his whole life was spent in the circle of a few miles; so guileless, that he lets Jacob overreach him rather than disbelieve his assurance; so tender, that his mother's death was the poignant sorrow of years, and that in his blind old age he must have Esau kiss him when he came near; so patient and gentle, that peace with his neighbours was dearer than even such a coveted possession as a well of living water dug by his own men; so grandly obedient, that he put his life at his father's disposal; so firm in his reliance on God, that his greatest concern through life was to honour the Divine promise given to his race; so devout in his unwavering loyalty to the faith of Abraham—it is easy to understand why even our Lord's authority is vouchsafed for his having passed from earth to heaven at his death.

Of Ishmael, his half-brother, little is told us. From his childhood till he was a grown lad he had been regarded as the future chief of his father's tribe. The pride and delight of Abraham, who was over eighty when this his first son was born, he doubtless had been caressed and flattered by old and young. But the birth of Isaac had in a moment disinherited him, and left both him and his mother once more the mere personal slaves of Sarah, now their bitter enemy. That Hagar had lost her head, at her elevation as the mother of Abraham's only son, was natural; and doubtless she fancied herself far above the childless Sarah in his regards; but to both the change must have been terrible when banished from the encampment. Nor was there anything to soften the blow. Keturah's sons, at a later time, were sent off with a gift of flocks and herds; but Ishmael

and his mother had no more than a skin of water and some bread.

Hard as it must have been to Abraham thus to send away his first-born, it must have been harder still for both mother and son to be thus turned adrift in the desert, to make their way to some friendly tents; and it is no wonder that the remembrance of their sufferings, before they found such a refuge, glowed in the heart of the lad. Embittered at the insult to his mother, and at his own wrongs, he henceforth proudly cast off all relations to his father's tribe, and from the heir-expectant of a quiet pastoral encampment, grew up into the mere wandering Arab, relying on his bow and spear, his hand against every man and every man's hand against him.

Circumstances, indeed, made this natural. The open sweep of the desert fanned the love of its wild freedom into a passion; forced him to depend on the chase for his living; exposed him to danger from hostile tribes and from beasts of prey; and the dull sense of wrong, withal, kept him aloof from mankind, except when he swooped down on the passing caravan, or the unsuspecting encampment, for plunder.

Yet the simple shepherd life, amidst which he had grown up, must have been early adopted by him and his people in a measure; for we find the Hazeroth, or "circles" formed by the tents of a tribe round its flocks, among the characteristics of his family.[1] But he had little taste for a peaceful life. As in Esau's case, the wilder side of Arab nature was strongest in him, and his bent must always have been towards stir and adventure rather than quiet and unexciting employments. In boyhood and early youth the darling of

[1] Gen. xxv. 16. The word is wrongly translated "towns."

Abraham, he had become self-willed and impatient of restraint. High-spirited and fond of listening at the watch-fires of his father's herdsmen, to their stories of feuds and encounters with hostile neighbours at the wells, or with the freebooters of the desert; he had early become enamoured of the excitement of border life on the open wastes. The chase of the gazelle or the wild goat, and the more dangerous pursuit of the bear or the leopard, had doubtless in early youth inured him to exertion and adventure, and the taste for it clung to him through life. His aptest emblem was to be the wild ass of the desert,[1] that no man can tame and that scorns the multitude of the city,[2] and delights in the far-off pastures of the wilderness.

Of his future history little is told. To separate him finally from Abraham's tribe, Hagar sought out for him an Egyptian wife; a countrywoman, therefore, of her own. As the great emir's son he would doubtless be received with consideration by the tribe he joined, and would soon find himself at the head of retainers of his own. Tradition speaks of his having married a daughter of the sheik of his new encampment: and the desert was already the home of many bands of nomades, with some of whom he no doubt formed alliances.[3]

When Abraham died Ishmael was a man of nearly ninety and had long been a great desert chief. He reappears, for a moment, at the patriarch's burial, at which Isaac and he met once more. It must have been a striking scene when the two brothers, so long separated, united to pay the last honours to one equally dear to both, and showed in their doing so their high sense of his worth. Isaac, with his

[1] Gen. xvi. 12. The angel says he will be "a wild ass man."
[2] Job xxxix. 7.
[3] Gen. x. 25-30.

hundreds of household slaves; Ishmael, with his troops of wild retainers and half-savage allies, in all the state of a Bedouin prince, gathered before the cave of Machpelah, in the midst of the men of Heth, to pay the last duties to the Father of the Faithful, would make a notable subject for an artist.

A few isolated notices sum up all that is known, besides, of this strange wild figure of old times. Sons and daughters, born from different wives, grew into great clans, and even into powerful states; like that of the Nabathæans, who, four centuries before Christ, made Petra the capital of a wide kingdom; and that of the Ituræans, who, hereafter, were to dispute with Moses, on the east of the Jordan, for the possession of the Hauran. A strange fate linked the fortunes of Esau, the outcast of Isaac's household, with those of Ishmael, the outcast from that of Abraham, in the marriage of the future father of the Edomites with Mahalath, "the lyre," Ishmael's daughter, to humour Isaac and Rebekah's wish for marriage into the same stock. Ishmael was then an old man of a hundred and fourteen, but he lived twenty-three years more. We hear nothing more of him, however, than that, at last, he wandered farther east than any of the encampments of his sons or daughters.[1] The Ishmaelites, indeed, gradually spread from the Red Sea to the Euphrates.[2] Over these wide desert spaces they

[1] The phrase "he died in the presence of all his brethren" (Gen. xxv. 18) should rather be as in the text. Naphal, "to fall," "to die," translated "died," means also to "set one's self down," "to dwell." The word translated "before," means here, and in Gen. xxiii. 17, "to the east." In Deut. xxxii. 49, the same phrase is translated "over against," but it should be "east of."

[2] *Ant.*, i. 12. 4. Genesis describes the limits of the Ishmaelites, as extending in open villages and encampments (translated "towns and castles," ver. 16) from Havilah, apparently on the African coast, as far south as Bab el Mandeb, to Shur that is, the fortified wall *east* of (not *before*) Egypt, in the direction of Assyria; that is, in Northern or Stony Arabia, including Petra. Gen. xxv. 18.

have roamed, the same in every age. "No one of them," says Ammianus Marcellinus, writing in the fourth century of our era, "ever lays hold of a plough, or plants a tree, or seeks food from tilling the soil. They wander continually, roaming through wide tracts, without a home, without fixed dwellings, without laws. Nor do they ever stay long under the same sky, or rest satisfied long with any district. Their life is spent in constant movement." Arabs, indeed, have still a fixed hatred of agriculture. A small tribe, known as the Club-bearers, living on the plain of Sharon, having, of late years, taken, in some measure, to tillage of the most modest character, are despised by their brethren on that account. The flocks and herds on the hills and slopes of the country are owned by tent-Arabs. The land-tilling peasantry own nothing, and, as cattle and flocks are the wealth of the land, are looked down upon by the pastoral nomades.

Jacob and Esau, the twin sons of Isaac and Rebekah, born twenty years after the marriage of their parents, when Isaac was sixty, present a striking contrast, alike in character and ultimate fortune. The very name of Jacob, if his mother chose it, seems to show that he was the favourite from infancy, for we find that one of the cities of Palestine taken by Thothmes III., before the patriarch's time, is called, on the wall of Karnac, Jacob-el—"Jacob the god"—so that the name was that of a local deity. If given to Rebekah's son as ennobled by such a sacred use, it would at once account for the difference in the esteem shewn to the two brothers respectively. Meanwhile their characters developed in very opposite ways. Esau is frank and generous; Jacob, crafty, selfish, and mean. Free-handed, light-hearted, and careless,

the shaggy, energetic hunter shows off for a time to far greater advantage than the plodding, quiet, astute dweller in tents.

But a closer study of the whole lives of the two does not support this earlier estimate. In Jacob, we have a struggle against baser elements of character, gradually resulting in the triumph of the nobler; in Esau, the original good darkens, as he grows older, into overmastering evil. Nothing seems to be wanting to depreciate Jacob. He out-wits his brother, deceives his father, and seems to make a bargain even in his prayer. He is more than a match for Laban in craft, and returns Esau's impulsive friendship, when they meet, with cautious distrust. At Shechem, he thinks only of the possible injury to himself that may follow the treachery of his sons, and is silent as to their crime; and even when on the point of going to Joseph, he is suspicious and wary to the last.

Yet, with all these abatements, his life, seen as a whole, stands in a far higher light than that of his brother. If Esau arrest our interest at first, with his wild, rough spirit, the type of a man of the field—his bow, his arrows, and his spear his delight—hastening to chase the antelope at his father's desire, and bring home venison for his pleasure; if we cannot but sympathize with him in his "great and exceeding bitter cry," "Bless me, even me also, O my father," on finding himself over-reached; the solid qualities which command permanent esteem are nevertheless wanting. He has no depth of nature, lives for the moment, cares nothing for higher interests, has no aim but the present satisfaction of his pleasures or bodily wants, and if capable of generous impulses is no less so of plans of deep-seated revenge. Open, manly, and even at times

magnanimous,—with all the elements, in fact, that might have ripened into a splendid character, — the want of solid qualities changes him gradually into a mere Bedouin chief, living by war and plunder. The race of Edom which sprang from him—fickle, turbulent, false, and unruly—embodies only too fully his worst characteristics. Their homes in the strong defiles of Seir, a fitting seat for attacking their neighbours, or for defence from their hatred, are themselves, when contrasted with Jacob's tents in the open country, striking commentaries on the respective tendencies of the two brothers.

In Jacob, on the other hand, we see the best as well as the worst qualities of his race. If the earlier half of his life shows much that is unworthy, even through it there runs that thoughtful foresight and steadfast pursuit of a great aim which alone secure lasting and noble results. In his sin against Esau and his father in regard to the birthright, he seeks a high end by ignoble means; he does evil that good may come. Its supreme worth, as carrying with it the inheritance of the Divine promise, was little esteemed by Esau. "He did eat and drink, and rose up and went his way: thus Esau despised his birthright." A short delay, at most, would have secured him food in his father's tents, without any sacrifice;[1] but to satisfy his hunger on the moment was more to a mind so light than any good even a little way off. To Jacob, on the other hand, to transmit the promise to his posterity, as the chosen race, was above all things precious. Disdaining useful work, Esau chose the busy idleness of life in the desert; but

[1] The pottage coveted by Esau was of lentiles, a species of vetch. The red lentile is considered the best. It is generally used as pottage even now, and is much grown in Egypt and Palestine.

Jacob, during long years, was content to toil on patiently with settled purpose. Through prosperity and adversity; in distant exile and after his return; through years of sorrow and in his peaceful decline, the steadfast aim of his life never wavered. Nor did he show a less noble tenacity in other directions. The love which sprang up at his first meeting with Rachel at Laban's well made the seven years of hard service by which he had won her seem but a few days; and, long after he had buried her on the way to Bethlehem, she was on his lips, in his dying words to her grandchildren.[1] His mother's nurse, whom she had brought with her from Haran, drew, in her declining years, to Jacob rather than Esau, and the grief he felt at the loss of such a link to the past was seen in the tree beneath which he laid her being henceforth known as "the oak of weeping."[2] Towards Joseph and Benjamin, Rachel's children, his relations were equally tender, for the very thought of their loss seemed as if it would "bring his grey hairs in sorrow to the grave."

Nor was there less at least of ultimate worth in the higher aspects of his character. When he started from Bethel for Mesopotamia, his religion was still mingled with too much human contrivance; but he becomes a different man as he grows older. The struggles and trials of many years brought out what was best in him, and softened and melted away much that was ignoble and doubtful. We see him at his best, after the mysterious inward struggle in the night at Peniel; when "he wept and made supplication," "and had power over the angel and prevailed." Till then he had shown too much reliance on human craft, even while true to his faith in the promises; but trouble was

[1] Gen. xlviii. 7. [2] Gen. xxxv. 8.

gradually transforming him from Jacob, "the supplanter," to Israel, "the Prince of God." His prayer in anticipation of the meeting with Esau, with its touching confession that he was not worthy of the least of all the mercies and of all the truth shown him, breathes a very different spirit from that with which he left Canaan long years before; and this contrite humility presently won its final triumph in the mysterious scene at the ford of the Jabbok; a name meaning "the wrestler." Purified and proved by trial, the higher qualities of his nature, for the most part, shine out more and more, till it is felt to be in perfect keeping with his later life that he alone of the patriarchs, as a ripened saint, leaves a solemn prophetic blessing to his children as he dies.

In their boyhood the two lads had enjoyed the privilege of having their grandfather Abraham with them, for he survived till they were about fifteen. But neither of them reproduced his grand characteristics. The first forty years of their life developed two very different men. Esau was clearly reverting to a lower grade of civilization—that of the wandering Bedouin; Jacob slowly advancing from the life of a shepherd to that of a tiller of the ground. Isaac, little inclined to moving about, had added agriculture to the care of flocks. We find him moving his tents from Be-ersheba to Gerar, a district much the same in general character, but more on the line of travel, for it lies about twenty-five miles north-west of Be-ersheba, and only a few miles south of Gaza, while the great route to Egypt passes through it. It lies open and for the most part unoccupied to-day as it must have done in the days of Isaac; the landscape undulating with gentle slopes, cut into, here and there, by dry water channels, through which larger or

smaller torrents rush, at times, in winter after storms; the surface drainage of the hills behind finding, thus, its way to the sea. The grass is very sparse and much broken by clumps of squills and other bulbous roots; scarlet anemones lighting it up into a red sheet of colour in the early spring; wells and grain-pits dot the slopes, some with low-domed roofs still remaining; others, without; many filled up, others deep. Their walls are strongly built of small stones set in mortar largely mixed with diminutive shells; but the inside, below ground, is coated with hard cement. One, which was of huge size—nearly twenty feet across—had water in it about sixty feet down. The cost of excavating and walling round such a well must have been very great, for the wall inside must reach down to the rock. In all I counted about twenty wells and grain-pits, of which eighteen were more or less filled up. The upper porous limestone of the central hills, and indeed of Palestine generally, allows the rain, to a large extent, to filter through it to an underlying sheet of hard limestone which slopes towards the sea, forming a shelf over which the water flows in a subterranean stream, below the whole coast plain, from north to south. Hence it is only necessary to sink a well to reach a copious supply of "living water."

The quantity of broken pottery over the whole district is wonderful, and shows, at once, the extreme brittleness of the untempered fictile ware of the East, and the former abundance of population. The soil is well fitted for such agriculture as is known in Palestine, so that Isaac could readily grow on it what he chose, while the slopes and downs around offered wide pasture for his flocks and herds. Gerar was one of the oldest settlements of the Philistines;[1] its

[1] Gen. x. 19, 26.

kings, whose hereditary title was Abimelech, having had constant relations with Abraham and Isaac.[1] The name of Gerar appears, indeed, in the list of Palestine towns taken by Thothmes III, about sixteen hundred years before Christ. Broad fields and abundant harvests became familiar sights at Gerar and Be-ersheba, and quickened a love for the soil in Jacob, which he afterwards showed in his fields at Shechem,[2] and transmitted to his posterity. With the one exception of a proposal from a neighbouring petty king to take Rebekah into his harem, little could have disturbed these tranquil years. Strifes about wells were apparently the only break in the quiet; for the Philistines, envious of Isaac's prosperity, and perhaps half afraid of his many retainers, once and again disputed his possession of the wells he had sunk with great labour through the limestone rock. They had already taken the common Oriental course, for driving away unwelcome or hostile neighbours, of filling with earth those dug by Abraham; but nothing could ruffle the even spirit of the peace-loving Isaac. To hew out a well in the desert pastures was a great thing, in which even the chiefs were proud to join. Its successful termination inspired the poets of the tribe, and caused universal rejoicings. "Spring up, ye springs," says a snatch of an old popular song of Israel, of the time of the wilderness wanderings,[3] "springs which princes dug—which the nobles of the people hewed out, with the ruler's staff and their sceptre." King Uzziah was famous for his many wells, and doubtless Isaac was no less so in his day. Fierce and desperate feuds doubtless sprang up from time to time when possessions so precious were assailed: but Isaac,

[1] Gen. xxi. 22–32. [2] Gen. xxxvii. 7.
[3] Num. xxi. 17. See Ewald, *Gesch.*, vol. ii. p. 287.

timid and gentle, only moved to other pastures and sank other wells. In these disputes we can well imagine Esau taking part: but Jacob, like his father, would be more likely to think quiet cheaply bought by yielding.

The marriages of the patriarchal families decided the history of their subsequent branches. Quiet progress from households of shepherds to a settled nation turned necessarily on the life adopted, and that again was largely affected by the domestic alliances made. The daughter of Bethuel, coming from "the city" of Nahor, must have brought with her some instincts of a settled life; and so, also, with the daughters of Laban, Bethuel's son. But what tastes could grow up in the children of Ishmael or Esau except those of the wild, unimproving Arab; born as they were of idolatrous mothers, wherever the wandering camp of their parents chanced for the time to be pitched? It was a Divine impulse, therefore, which, acting through the Eastern craving for unmixed blood, led to the choice of brides for Isaac and Jacob, from the old home of the race. Esau's leanings were only too plain in his bringing home two Hittite maidens as wives.[1] It was clear that the traditions of Abraham and Isaac had no hold on him, and that their worship of the One Only God, to whom he himself had been dedicated by circumcision, was nothing in his eyes. To build up a chosen race, the heirs of the Divine covenant, involved strict separation from the heathen around; but

[1] Isaac and Esau both married at the age of forty, and the connection of Jacob's being sent off to Mesopotamia for a wife, with the statement of the grief of both parents at Esau's alliances, points to both events happening near each other in time. Moreover, chap. xxviii. 9 assumes that Ishmael was alive when Jacob was sent off. But he was 114 years old when Esau married, and lived in all 137 years, so that he died when Jacob was sixty-three or sixty-four. Jacob must therefore have gone to Mesopotamia long before, and was probably just over forty when he did so. See art. "Jakob" in Riehm. So, also, Michaelis, in *Mosäisches Recht.*

Esau, with this knowledge, had deliberately forsaken his own race, with all its hopes and aspirations, and identified himself with those from whom God had required them to keep themselves distinct. No wonder that it was "bitterness of heart," to both Isaac and Rebekah, to see him thus break away from all they counted most sacred, and despise his birthright by slighting the conditions which God had imposed for its inheritance.

In this light the eagerness of Rebekah to secure for her favourite Jacob the blessing so utterly disregarded by his brother, is more easily understood, though no excuse can be offered for the treacherous and selfish means by which it was obtained; means sorely punished by the course of his future life, for Rebekah never saw Jacob again after his exile, and Jacob had to toil for over twenty years, far from home, so dear to an Oriental, instead of sharing the ease and wealth of his father's tents. But craft and deceit are natural to the Arab, and Laban's character shows that, in this, Rebekah's family was no exception. Nor is it to be overlooked that Jacob makes no after-claim for the birthright on the ground of his transaction with Esau, whose withdrawal to the desert, long before his father's death, of itself left him the headship of the race.[1]

[1] The hair of Syrian goats is in some parts of the creature so fine that it was used by the Romans as a substitute for human hair. (Martial, xii. 46. Tuch, on v. 16.) The expression, "he smelled the smell of his raiment" (Gen. xxvii. 27), is illustrated by the customs of India at the present day. "It is not common to salute," says Roberts; "they simply smell each other." Of an amiable man it is said, "How sweet is the smell of that man!" So, a lady wishing to show love to a child, in Asia Minor, still says, "Come hither, darling, and let me smell thee." Eastern garments are very often highly perfumed. Rosenmüller's *A. und N. Morgenland*, vol. i. p. 122.

The "dew of heaven" (xxvii. 28), or, rather, the moisture left by the night breeze from the sea, which is the substitute for dew in Palestine, there being no real dew, is essential to the harvest in Palestine after the rains have ceased. This rich supply of moisture enables the peasants to raise great crops of water-melons from the sands near Cæsarea, and is everywhere the life of vegetation in the Holy Land. If it fail, there is no crop; if it be abundant, the crops are heavy.

Esau's defection alone would have demanded a careful marriage for Jacob, and the necessity for flight gave the desired opportunity to secure it. Jacob must go to Mesopotamia, the old home of the race, and seek there a wife of the pure blood. That he would be welcomed was a matter of course, for it is still the rule among the Arabs that a cousin, as one of themselves, has the first claim in marriage.[1] Receiving, therefore, a parting blessing from Isaac, involving the transmission of the great promise to Abraham, he sets out on his long journey, and on the second or third night reaches the heights over which the track lay to the north, along the backbone of the Palestine hills, resting, finally, for the night, at Bethel. No place could be more desolate than this famous spot is now; but we must remember that, even so late as many centuries after Jacob, bears inhabited the thick stunted growths that then covered the hills so bleak at present. They are, in fact, mere humps of gray rock, seamed with superficial fissures from which spring threads of coarse shrubs, aromatic plants, and rough thorns. Here and there, in the hollows, there are a few spots where the primitive plough of the country has loosened the ground enough to permit barley or other crops to be sown, but these are mere patches in the barren expanse. In the broadest valley there is an old tank, on the dry bottom of which my tent was pitched. The village, chiefly rude cabins, with a very few two-story houses, runs along the top of one of the heights, and a confusion of rough stone walls enclose, here and there, a few fig trees, or a spot of lentiles, or grain, or a few vines. Above the melancholy hamlet rises a high square

[1] Lane's *Modern Egyptians*, vol. i. p. 215.

building with a low dome, and there are some ancient tombs in the rocky ledges around. There was, assuredly, no difficulty in Jacob's finding a pillow, for the whole landscape is covered thick with loose stones of all sizes. The bare sheets of rock are relieved by no trees: all is stony desolation. When you cross the hills round Bethel, however, on the way south to Michmash, the country improves greatly, and any one standing even now where Abraham must have stood when he looked down into the Jordan valley, could see ploughs going, or crops rising or ripening; of course on the modest oriental scale, in small patches, amidst much neglected land. Trees, moreover, are not wanting in this part; and, indeed, as you go down past Ai, to the Pass of Michmash, you ride through a green valley, dotted with clumps of small evergreen oaks which are rough with mistletoe, and have the delight of seeing a brook babbling onwards to the east. Taking for a pillow one of the many stones which lie around, amidst sheets of bare rock, and sinking into the sleep of the weary, the thoughts which had engaged him by day, took shape in a vision.[1] The great stones on all sides build themselves up into a vast staircase, lost in the heights of the open sky, and on this angels are seen ascending and descending.[2] It was clear that other spots than Be-ersheba were under heavenly protection; and that, little as he had thought it, he was the object of loving interest to the messengers of God. Still more, the Divine voice sounds from the light in which the vision seemed to lose itself above, assuring the houseless wanderer that the promise

[1] The words, "God who *answered* me in my distress," spoken long afterwards (chap. xxxv. 3) in reference to this incident, seem to imply earnest prayer as marking it.

[2] Angels were not yet imagined as having wings.

given to Abraham would be fulfilled to himself, since he felt its value, and that wherever he went God would protect him, and in due time restore him to the land he was leaving. No wonder if on waking he felt, that, though he had hitherto thought of God as specially present at the altar-sanctuary of Be-ersheba, He was no less present even here. To the wanderer the spot was henceforth "BETHEL, the House of God," and "the gate of Heaven."[1]

Abraham and Isaac had built altars to commemorate Divine appearances, but Jacob had to content himself with setting up the stone on which his head had rested, as a memorial; some of the oil he carried with him as food, serving as the symbol of an offering to anoint it. In all ages the earliest approaches to a "House of God," whether in eastern or western lands, have been equally rude. Similar stone memorials had already, from the remotest times, abounded in Canaan and the countries round it. The one now raised by Jacob in the centre of the land, was hence in keeping with a well-known practice, and made the spot so specially holy, that Canaanite and Hebrew, alike, afterwards fought for its possession through centuries.[2] A second and more permanent memorial, in the pillar raised by him on his return from Mesopotamia,[3] long after, and consecrated not only by anointing, but by his pouring a drink offering over it, showed the intense impression left on his mind by the vision; an impression which re-appears even in his dying blessing on Joseph, in which he can think

[1] See a striking passage in Herder's *Ebräische Poesie*, vol. ii. p. 21. Jacob's vow to pay God a tenth of all that God might give him (ver. 22) was the ground of the gift of the tenths to the Levites as God's representatives. Michaelis, vol. iii. p. 22; iv. p. 96. Jacob himself only imitated Abraham. See p. 342.

[2] Josh. xii. 16. Judg. i. 22.

[3] Gen. xxxv. 14.

of God only as the "Shepherd of the stone of Israel."[1] Nor are echoes of Bethel wanting from a wider circle than Israel, for the Phœnicians gave a god, once highly honoured by them on this very spot, the name of Batulos, while the sacred stones worn in their "charms" bore the name of Batulia,[2] though it is doubtful if in this name there is any more than an apparent reference, from the sound of the word to Bethel. Sacred stones known by that name were, indeed, worshipped also in Phrygia, Syria, on the Euphrates, and in Egypt; while a rude stone, older than any temple, was anointed with oil by pilgrims at the ancient Delphi, and the Mohammedan world to this day reveres the black stone of the Caaba, at Mecca, as a relic of Abraham and Ishmael.[3] The "Menhir" or "long stone" is, perhaps, the most ancient of human monuments. The word for it in Hebrew is Matzaibah, which is used for that now set up by Jacob. One has been found in Moab to which the Arabs still give the name of "Mansub": a word related to the Hebrew name. There are hundreds of circles, dolmens, and other collections of sacred stones east of the Jordan, but none on the west of it, perhaps from the zeal with which Josiah destroyed all reputedly idolatrous symbols or associations. They were honoured also in Assyria, for we are told by Tiglath Pileser I. in his annals: "The monumental stones of Samas Rimmon, my forefather, I have anointed with oil: a victim I have sacrificed: to their place I have restored them;" and this is repeated more than once, of similar memorials.

There is, in the British Museum, a tablet recording gifts

[1] Gen. xlix. 24. [2] Ewald, *Alth.*, p. 159.

[3] Sir W. Muir's *Mahomet*, p. 14. The Scotch coronation stone, now in Westminster Abbey, was held in a similar way to be Jacob's pillow.

presented by certain persons to a temple, probably at Babylon, called Bet-ili. or Bethel—"the House of God." Were some of the early Semites, who formed one element of the prehistoric population from whose days this tablet has come down, already Monotheists, before Abraham, or were others besides him worshippers of the One God?

The Hebrew word Makom, used by Jacob for the "place," which he found at Bethel, appears to have been used by the Canaanites as the word for a sanctuary, or holy spot. We read, for example, that the Israelites were utterly to destroy all "the places" "wherein the nations they would dispossess served their gods,"[1] and the same word is used, in this sense, by the Talmud, for the holy places used by Israel before the building of the temple. At this day, moreover, the Arabic word Mûkam, or place *where one stands*, for prayer, is still the name for the buildings, small, dome-topped, whitewashed, which crown very many hills in Palestine. They are, no doubt, the successors of the "high places" of ancient Israel, and are regarded by the peasantry as so sacred that they put their ploughshares or any other valuable property into them for safety, feeling quite certain that no one would dare to brave the vengeance of the Spirit which haunts the Mûkam, by stealing them. The incident doubtless marks the beginning of a great revolution in the patriarch's spiritual life. That all his craft in overreaching Esau had ended, so far, only in lonely exile, when remembered in connection with the heavenly vision, must have made him feel that crooked ways had no sanction from God, even when used for good ends; and that he must henceforth follow a higher course. In his future intercourse with Laban, indeed, he opposes craft

[1] Deut. xii. 2.

with craft, but only when forced, after long and faithful service, to defend himself and his household from cunning which sought to undo him. It is no longer his choice, but his necessity.

Strengthened to abiding trust in the Promise renewed to him by the Divine voice itself, and by the assurance that angels were near him, fugitive and wanderer as he was, to promote its fulfilment and to watch and guard him, Jacob "lifted up his feet," and at last came to the land of "the Sons of the East." What follows is a charming idyll. Resting by a well in the district whence his forefathers had come,[1] he learns from some shepherds gathered around it, that he is close to the encampment of his uncle Laban, so called, perhaps, after the "white-glancing" moon—the special god of Haran, of which, indeed, Laban was one of the names—and that Rachel, his cousin, will soon come to water her father's flock. She was, then, in all probability a mere child of from seven to ten years old, for we find her coming out alone, which she would not have done if she had been a year or two older, and thus marriageable. Rebekah, who was older, came out when Abraham's servant was seeking a wife for Isaac, with "the daughters of the city." I once asked a Turk, in Asia Minor, on his telling me he was going to be married, how old the lady was, and

[1] It is often spoken of as "Padan" (the yoke, or hollow between two ranges of hills) of "Aram." Ewald, vol. i. p. 461. Colonel Chesney describes the landscape of Haran as shut in by a low range of limestone hills which runs to it from Oorfa. The plain is threaded with beds of ancient irrigating canals, drawn from the river Belik. The archways and towers of the ancient castle noticed already (p. 263) are still perfect, and the old city can still be traced underneath; its streets, laid out at right angles, and the wreck of marble and porphyry pillars lying round. But this relates to an indefinitely later age than that of Jacob. Things, then, would be more aptly illustrated, perhaps, by the tents of the Arabs in the neighbourhood, and by their beehive-shaped stone huts, the roof self-supporting. *Expedition to the Euphrates*, p. 433.

found she had reached her eleventh summer. Her bridegroom had paid so many piastres to her father, for her, and would marry her when the barley harvest was over. Arabs still trace their descent from far-away tribes of the same name, and seek alliances with them in marriage. In the early morning, moreover, one may still see the camels, or herds, or flocks, their shadows stretching out in the rising light, making for the wells, behind their keepers, who play before them on the same droning reed-pipe, like a rude single or double flageolet, as was used in remote ages. You may still see, also, the young girls, still children, tending the flocks, as Leah and Rachel did: their hair flying wild in the wind; a simple blue sack their only dress; their brown faces lighted up by great black eyes, often very beautiful. They can only come out thus while still too young to be shut up in the woman's part of the tent. As soon as they are thus admitted to budding womanhood, which is very early, it would not be becoming for them to appear without their mothers, in their journey to and from the well. While Jacob waits, Rachel thus appears, leading her sheep; for then, as now, it was the custom for the unmarried daughters of chiefs to take the flocks to pasture and to water. But to see is to love; at once, and for life. Rolling aside the stone which covers the well,[1] Jacob takes her toil on himself. His strength and good-will are hers, till at last, the work done, his emotion breaks out

[1] Wells are still the spots where the youth and girls of Bedouin life congregate, and at the wells alone is Oriental courtship carried on to this day. The Syrian girl, especially if a Druse or a Christian, unlike the secluded daughter of the towns, is frequently entrusted with the care of her father's flock. The well, the most precious of possessions, is carefully closed with a heavy slab until all those whose flocks are entitled to share its water have gathered. The time is noon. The first comers gather and report the gossip of the tribe. The story of Jacob and Rachel is, in its most minute details, a transcript of the Arab life of to-day. Tristram's *Nat. Hist. of Bible*, p. 142.

incontrollably, and, with the privilege of a relation, he falls on her neck and kisses her; weeping for very joy, like a true Oriental, as he tells her he is Jacob, her cousin, the son of Rebekah. Even Laban, cold and hard as he was, is touched by the story; and, running to greet his sister's son, leads him home with tender embraces, and long and repeated kissing,[1] making him welcome as "his bone and his flesh."

A month's stay showed that the value of Jacob's skill and industry as a shepherd made it desirable to retain him. But now begins the long record of Laban's selfish and crafty greed. "Why should Jacob, though a brother, serve for nothing? To a brother one gives rather more than less." The answer was ready. Could he only have Rachel, his love at first sight, he would gladly work seven years to get her; a proposal as gladly accepted, for was he not a tribesman and a cousin; and so the long week of years, spent in her presence, "seemed but a few days for the love he had to her."

For the double marriage which followed Jacob can hardly be blamed, for he was tricked into it, and indeed the custom alleged is still strictly followed in India,[2] though it was forbidden to the Hebrews.[3] Marriage with cousins was not, however, prohibited to them, though even in Jacob's day, such unions as that of Abraham with his half-sister Sarah, or of Nahor with his niece Milcah, which continued common among Canaanites, Arabs, Egyptians,[4] Assyrians, and later among the Persians, had apparently ceased in Israel, when the growth of the nation offered a wider selec-

[1] The Hebrew verb is in the conjugation Piel, which has this force.

[2] Rosenmüller, vol. i. p. 138. TheBook of Jubilees, Cap. xviii., proposes this even for a law in Israel.

[3] Lev. xviii. 18.

[4] Ebers' *Uarda*, vol. i. p. 159.

tion. In the Mosaic law such marriages were strictly forbidden.[1]

The dull and weak eyes of Leah were a poor exchange for Rachel, for she was finely made and had the splendid gazelle-like eyes so dear to an Oriental.[2] But Eastern brides come to their husbands veiled, and the substitution of one sister for another was easy. A second long week of years must be served for Rachel, though he might take her as his wife forthwith.[3] "Keep the week's wedding-feast for Rachel, as you have done for Leah, and you may have her, if you serve seven years after, in payment." Rebekah had received several slaves as her dowry, but Laban, ever mean as he was shifty, gives Leah and Rachel only one apiece.[4]

A double marriage is seldom happy, but the trick by which Jacob had been forced into this one added a special trouble, in the inevitable partiality for the one sister, and apparent neglect of the other. Leah's numerous family, however, and Rachel's childlessness, must have seemed, even to Jacob, the rebuke of Providence for his different treatment of the two, though it served only as a partial solace to Leah's wounded spirit. Nothing, indeed, could be more touching than the dismal rivalry between the sisters, nor could any commentary more telling be found

[1] Lev. xviii. 9, 11; xx. 17. Deut. xxvii. 22.

[2] This is the sense of Gen. xxix. 17.

[3] He received Rachel for the work he *was* to do (xxix. 27).

[4] Daughters seldom had any inheritance, though this was not always the case, as we see in the daughters of Zelophehad. Num. xxvii. 2, 3, 4. All daughters, moreover, were not sold, and those who were not had so much the greater claims on their husbands. Hence the complaint of Rachel against her father: "Hath he not counted us as strangers? for he hath sold us and hath quite devoured also our money (that which he got for us)." Michaelis, vol. ii. pp. 71, 75, 108. The custom of serving a term of years as payment for a wife is still common in Syria. Kitto's *Pictorial Palestine*, vol. i. p. 93.

against the practice of polygamy. The names given by Leah to her successive children, and the gift of the personal slave-attendants of each sister in turn to Jacob, as concubines, that each might adopt as her own the offspring thus born, speaks of long years of domestic misery. Leah herself bore her husband six sons and a daughter, the only one named in Jacob's family, though there no doubt were others.[1] Zilpah, "the droppings of myrrh," Leah's maid, added to these, two sons, whom Leah adopted.

But now, at last, Rachel's sorrow is turned to joy by the birth of Joseph, a name which lent itself, in its Hebrew form, to a verbal play such as Orientals like, for one Hebrew word—Asaph—means "to take away," while another —Yasaph—means "to add," so that the happy mother could remind herself in the child being "Joseph" that not only was her reproach taken away, but that she hoped another son would be "added" hereafter. In its most ancient use, however, the word "Joseph" seems to be derived from the expression for "a diviner"—which is Asip or Asipu—with a sound in Old Hebrew or Phœnician very like the form employed in the patriarch's name. It seems probable, from this, that "Joseph" had originally been identical with the Babylonian "Asipu"—"the god of the oracle." Bethel may have been the site of his temple or holy place, and it may have been on this ground as much as from its having been the scene of Jacob's vision that Jeroboam chose it as the chief sanctuary of the great tribe of Ephraim, which gloried in being "the son of Joseph." It is a curious fact, moreover, that one of the cities enumerated by Thothmes III. on the walls of Karnak, as taken by him in Palestine, about sixteen hundred years before Christ, is called Jo-

[1] Chap. xxxvii. 35.

seph-el or "Joseph, the god." Was this an old Canaanite name for Bethel, so that the "House of El," and the "House of Joseph," meant the same? We must remember, at the same time, that to rest any conclusions on the etymology of proper names must always be very speculative; for how little, in our own day, has the original meaning of a name to do with its present use! Grosvenor is, no doubt; "the chief huntsman," and Fletcher is "the featherer of arrows," but who thinks of this in connection with either?

Rachel's second son did, as we know, come, after long years, but not to "take away" her reproach still more fully, as she had hoped, for he was only her Benoni, the "son of her sorrow," with his mother's grave as the memorial of his birth!

The bargain with Laban for the wages of the third seven years shows craft met by more than its match. "I have consulted divination," says Laban, "and the Lord hath blessed me for thy sake:"[1] a strange mixing of heathen rites with the true religion, in keeping with his worshipping household gods. "Appoint me thy wages, and I will give it." Anxious to return to Canaan, Jacob sees in the offer a means of wealth at which he grasps. The colour of flocks must have been less varied in Laban's day to let him accept the conditions offered; for those claimed by Jacob, the brown sheep, and the spotted, ring-streaked, and speckled goats, are very numerous in every flock now.[2] The plan taken by him to secure these colours from Laban's flocks has been treated by some as incapable of producing the desired effect, which has therefore been ascribed to a special miracle. But many instances are familiar in which exter-

[1] Rev. J. M. Rodwell, in *Trans. of Soc. Bib. Arch.*, vol. ii. p. 115. The text quoted is Gen. xxx. 27.

[2] Tristram's *Nat. Hist. of Bible*, p. 144. *Land and Book*, p. 202.

nal impressions have shewn the most striking effect on yet unborn offspring. I have a photograph shewing a man and a boy each wanting the right fore-arm, though not at all related. The man, a gamekeeper near Barnstaple, had his arm shattered by the bursting of a gun, and the severity of the wound required the forepart, nearly to the elbow, to be cut off. But the honest fellow, anxious to get back to his place, insisted on leaving before the stump was healed, and took with him lint and other requisites for dressing it; looking to his wife's doing so. The poor woman, however, on seeing the maimed arm, fainted, and a neighbour's wife, present at the time, undertook the task, which she afterwards discharged daily. Some months later she had a son, and it was found to have been born with one of its arms exactly like the amputated stump of the gamekeeper. This is the boy in the photograph. The colours on sheep and goats are surely nothing to this.

The struggle is one of patient determination against every difficulty. The wage is ten times changed, and Jacob has to make good all losses by wild beasts or theft, by day or by night; but he keeps to his work with invincible patience, and honest fidelity. "In the day," said he, afterwards, without contradiction, to Laban, "the drought consumed me, and the frost by night,[1] and my sleep departed from mine eyes. God has seen my trouble and the labour of my hands."

The story of his final flight to Canaan is perfect in its Oriental colouring. At the head of his flocks and herds;

[1] The absence of clouds in hot countries permits so great a radiation of the heat of the earth into space, after sunset, there being no muffling of clouds to check it, that the nights are very cold. Hence rheumatism and similar ailments are especially common among the shepherds of Palestine. In *The Land and the Book*, the cold at night is noted, p. 369.

with his wives, children, and slaves, he strikes away, across the Euphrates, at the utmost speed so cumbered a march allows, for Mount Gilead, the outpost of "his own country." His flight remains unsuspected for three days, but, then, Laban, hearing of it, sets off on swift camels in pursuit; overtaking the fugitives on the seventh day, while they were still among the richly wooded and watered hills of Gilead, which mark off the fertile land from the desert, east of the Jordan.

The five tents of Jacob and his wives[1] had been pitched on the slope of the hills, apparently where they reach their highest elevation of 5,000 feet, not far from the Jabbok, the camels and flocks lying around, and now those of Laban are set up on a neighbouring hill, specially known as Mount Gilead. It is a moment of real danger to Jacob, for Laban's kinsmen, as the men of his tribe with him are called, are much the stronger.[2] He had given his daughters no inheritance,[3] and had treated Jacob with the utmost duplicity and harshness; but with true Arab dissimulation he chides Jacob for having stolen away without giving him an opportunity of dismissing him and his wives with a parting feast, or even letting him give his daughters a farewell kiss. That he was thus placable, was due, we are told, to a dream he had had overnight, warning him to do Jacob no harm. But the fugitives had done him the terrible wrong, as he must have thought it, of stealing his "gods," and these must be given back. Rachel, indeed, without Jacob's knowledge, had carried them off, doubtless for her own superstitious use, and had hidden them in one of the great basket-like bags fixed to the sides of her

[1] Chap. xxxi. 33. [2] Ver. 29.
[3] Ver. 14.

camel's saddle,[1] as a commodious lounge on the journey, and now sat in it, over them, feigning sickness; so that, as politeness would not allow her to be disturbed, they were not discovered, and Laban had unwillingly to lose them.[2] A treaty must, however, in Arab fashion, be made between him and Jacob, as a witness to their quiet parting, and a mark of the bounds henceforth to be fixed between them. Gladly assenting, Jacob, seemingly still as strong as when he, singly, rolled off the great stone from the well-mouth of Haran, by himself sets up on end a great stone as a memorial pillar; at the same time making his people pile up a cairn, like that which still marks off the limits of Arab tribes.[3] On this, to confirm the treaty, the two parties hold a feast; for doing so, especially taking bread and salt together, is still among Arabs a solemn pledge of friendship and brotherhood, and, if needed, of protection.[4] The night thus spent in friendship and joy, Laban and his camels strike off in the morning into the desert, and with them vanishes the last trace of the connection of the Israelites with Mesopotamia.[5] Gilead was henceforth the boundary between them and the Aramaic-speaking races of the east.

[1] There is also a kind of palanquin, five feet long, with curtains over and around it, which is fastened across the saddle of the camels for ladies' travelling. It may have been something of this kind. Burckhardt's *Bedouins*, p. 370. Ker Porter's *Travels*, vol. ii. p. 339.

[2] It is to be noticed that in chap. xxxi. 32, Jacob tells Laban that he will put to death any person in his encampment found to have stolen the gods. Thus, the patriarchs exercised the power of life and death. From chap. xxxviii. 24, it is further evident that even the heads of divisions or families in the encampment had this power. It is curious also to note, that Laban makes Jacob promise to take no more wives, (chap. xxxi. 50).

[3] It is striking to notice that rude stone heaps, the dolmens, perhaps, or the "circles" still existing east of the Jordan, are very often associated with the early history of Scripture. We find them at Bethel, Nebo, Gilgal, and elsewhere. There is still a fine group of rude stone remains at a place in Gilead called "Sûf," near Jerash. Does this mark the spot where Jacob and Laban parted?

[4] The words Gen. xxxi. 54, "offered sacrifices," means "killed beasts for a feast."

[5] Stanley's *Jewish Church*, vol. i. p. 63.

The dialects of both peoples, indeed, marked the spot; for Jacob had followed Abraham and Isaac in the use of Hebrew, and called his cairn Mizpah, the watch tower; from whose height, in the simple ideas of the time, God is to look far and wide to see that the treaty is kept; while Laban, "the white Syrian," called it Galeed, instead of Gilead, as Jacob would have pronounced it.[1]

Breaking up his camp on the heights of Gilead, from whence he could look over into the Land of Promise, the past, with its failings and lower qualities, seems to pass away from Jacob, and a higher spirit take their place. As angels had appeared when his wanderings began, so now, again, they visit him, perhaps this time also in a vision, even before he has crossed the Jordan on his return; to greet and welcome him back, and conduct him over the threshold of the sacred land. Henceforth he knows the place as Mahanaim, "the double camp,"—his own, and that of a host of angels,—a name it afterwards bore as one of the chief towns of Gilead.[2]

But now a new danger threatens him. Having sent messengers, as Arab chiefs are wont to do with each other, to Esau, to announce his return, he learns to his dismay that he is already on the way to him with 400 men. All he has won for himself, and even the future possession of Canaan, seems in extreme peril. Anticipating the worst, he divides his encampment, that one part may escape should the other perish. But his agony of mind proves the crisis of his spiritual history.[3] Feeling at last that he must

[1] God is spoken of in this incident for the first and last time as, "the God of Abraham and of Nahor—the God of their father" (Terah)—if, indeed, Laban did not think of a god for each; for Dillmann translates it, the gods of their fathers. Jacob swears by God under the name of "The Fear" of his father Isaac.

[2] Josh. xiii. 26, 30. 2 Sam. ii. 8; xvii. 24, 27. 1 Kings iv. 14.

[3] Jacob's words in his prayer (xxxii. 11) are striking; "He will come and smite

depend only on God, and smitten with the remembrance of his past sins, which after twenty years have thus found him out, he pours forth a prayer which breathes the purest humility, gratitude, and contrition. Taking all precautions to propitiate a brother he had so greatly offended, he spends the night at the ford of the torrent Jabbok, now the Zerka or Blue River—deep down where it enters the Jordan—by the one practicable ford in the great sandstone gorge, rich on its slopes with oleanders, and noisy in its torrent-bed with many swiftly rushing cascades. In the darkness, he passes through a mental struggle from which he comes forth, no longer Jacob, "the supplanter," but Israel, "a Prince of God." It is not necessary to materialize the scene; for the soul is the true sphere of that wrestling which secures spiritual blessing. Nor does even the halting on his thigh involve any physical struggle, though it implies miraculous agency.[1] Its lesson is only an enforcement

me as one stabs the mother protecting, with her body, her children like to be killed." Ges., *Thes.*, p. 1027.

[1] Gesenius says the Hebrew words, "Gîd ha Nasheh," translated in our version, "The sinew which shrank," ought to be the sciatic or ischiatic nerve. In the Arabic the word means this. The sciatic nerve runs from the hip down the back of the thigh, and is so broad and thick it might readily be thought a sinew. It is, in fact, the largest nerve of the body. *Thes.*, p. 921. Mühlau, *Lex.*, p. 171.

"The failings of the patriarchs are human, and the fact that they are not passed over in their history makes even the story of these shepherds of priceless worth to me. The timid Isaac, the crafty Jacob, stand before me as they really were; but they also show that the craft of the latter was of little service to him, and in his old age he shows a chastened and tried character which makes him a Ulysses among those Shepherd Fathers. His history is an instructive mirror of the human heart, and God Himself has effaced the blots which the youthful Jacob bore in his very name. 'Thou shalt be no longer Jacob,' says He, 'but a hero of God, Israel,' a name of honour which the poetry of the race adopts. It is not bodily might that is recorded in it, but the heroism of God, prayer and faith. . . . Jacob has divided his camp and flocks from fear of a nocturnal surprise by his brother. Now, far from his tent, not to sleep, but rather to keep from sleep, he prayed, he wrestled with God in supplication, and a visible symbol was granted him that his hero like faith had prevailed. Elohim appeared, not Jehovah, and you know that that word is always used with a special significance in Jacob's history as well as in the earlier parts of Scripture. Hosts of God place themselves by him like two wings of an en-

of what had preceded—that human policy is no safe reliance, but that he must trust in God.

He must be made to feel that He to whom he looks as his Protector, and on whose promises he relies, is pure and holy, and has no pleasure in lying and deceit. The mighty struggle was that of God with the still resisting evil of his nature; a struggle which cannot be spared any one destined to high spiritual ends, and conscious of being so. His whole past, from first to last, had been more or less a web of craft and contriving. He had striven with men, and might flatter himself to have overreached them; but he has now to contend with God. The agony was long and terrible—through the whole darkness of night till the dawn—but it was the wrestling of the new higher life with the old and evil, the agony of repentance and of a new birth; and from it he emerged a new man with a new name.[1] It was needed that he should have such a preparation to enter aright on his great inheritance, from which only the Jordan now divided him.

The dreaded meeting with Esau having passed off in peace, and his future friendship having been secured, with wonderful tact, by courtesy and splendid gifts, enhanced by the exhibition of the greatest honours to his brother, and the most lowly homage being paid him by Jacob, who bowed before him, to the ground, seven times, as was usual only to the highest personages; Jacob then moves over the

camped army. . . . And lo, there appears the divine form of a heavenly warrior and wrestles with him. All vanish with the dawn—indeed the tone and colour of the whole narrative move dimly, as if under the mysterious shades of night. The wrestler does not give his name, but leaves it to be conjectured. Jacob does not triumph, tells the story to no one, only wonders how a simple shepherd like him could have seen Elohim face to face and still live. But the great charm is the inner lesson. It is shown the trembling patriarch how idle it is to fear Esau, when he has overcome Jehovah by his prayer (Hos. xii. 4, 5)." Herder's *Ebräische Poesie*, vol. ii. p. 19.

[1] Umbreit, *Studien und Kritiken* (1848), p. 121.

Jordan—apparently in the opening spring, for the ewes had their lambs with them—and travels slowly on to the first camping ground of his race in the vale of Shechem, consecrated by Abraham's altar, the oldest Hebrew sanctuary in the land; and thus the natural resting place of this second, and more weighty immigration from Chaldæa.[1]

The re-appearance of Jacob and his shepherd tribe was, indeed, a great historical event, for they bore with them the future religious destinies of the world. Abraham's arrival had been only the first wave of the Hebrew movement, and it had for the time receded. In Jacob's return, it flowed back with permanent results. Ewald compares the newcomers, as contrasted with other Arab immigrants, to the Franks among the German invaders of Western Europe—the freest, shrewdest, most advanced of their race; under a leader who reflected in his own character, at once the noblest and the most imperfect qualities of his descendants.[2]

But Jacob is no longer like Abraham, only a shepherd chief, for the pastoral life is giving way to the agricultural, so that, instead of pitching a tent, he "builds him an house," and makes booths or huts for his cattle—from which the place takes the name of Succoth, or "The Booths." The broad valley is no longer open pasture land, but belongs to Shechem, a chief of the Hivites—that is, perhaps, "town dwellers," as contrasted with the peasant, who, living in Perazoth, or hamlets, were called Perizzites. He had built a town, then called Shechem, "the shoulder"

[1] Gen. xxxiii. 18, 20; xlviii. 22. Josh. xxiv. 32. John iv. 5, etc.

[2] Graetz speaks of the "Shepherd tribe passing the Jordan on a fine sunny day of spring" (vol. i. p. i), but Dr. Thomson thinks it was in autumn, from Jacob having lambs with him (Gen. xxxiii. 13), and also from his making booths at Shechem to protect his flocks, a step needful only in preparation for winter. *The Land and the Book*, p. 205. Others, as in the text, think the lambs show it was in spring.

—his own name, but also pointing to the spot being the highest part of the land and thus the watershed, as one sees in visiting its modern successor, Nablus. To the east of this, in the pleasant hollow between Mounts Gerizim and Ebal, or, as the Hebrews expressed it, "before" the town,[1] Jacob pitches his tent.[2] Nor has he a thought of moving thence, but buys a field for a homestead, paying for it, no longer as Abraham had done, when he bought Machpelah, in silver weighed in scales, but with coined money, apparently bearing on it the oldest mark of coinage, the figure of a lamb.[3] Here, after a time, he seems to have dug the well which still bears his name, on his own purchased ground, to prevent any such disputes as had happened at Be-ersheba, and to secure water for his flocks at all times—even should his neighbours forbid him the use of the forty springs which are said to run through the valley;[4] and here, in after days, Joseph, now a growing lad, ordered that his bones should be buried. It was natural that, with these traditions, Shechem became for Ephraim what Hebron was to the whole race, and that it hence took the foremost place in the future history of the settlement of the northern part of the land.

The well, dug so long ago, still remains and still bears the name of the patriarch, though its chief glory is that it offers the one spot which we can without question identify

[1] "Before the city": east of it.

[2] Our version says, "Jacob came to Shalem," and there is still a Salem among the hills on the east of the plain, opposite Shechem; but the word Shalem is thought by Mühlau and Volck to mean "in safety" (to Shechem). So Tuch, Knobel, Delitzsch, and Kalisch.

[3] Gesenius, *Thesaurus*, art. "Kesita." Silver is the only money mentioned till David's time, when gold appears. The Phœnicians used coin, other peoples still bartered. Chap. xxv. 25. Michaelis, *Mos. Recht*, vol. ii. p. 9. Wiseman's *Lectures*, vol. ii. p. 109.

[4] *The Land and the Book*, p. 473. *Land of Israel*, p. 147.

with the actual presence of our Lord. It lies a little off the track from the open plain on the east to Nablus, with no fence or protection round its wide open shaft beyond a poor wall immediately round the mouth. Coming from Shiloh, and turning west into the lovely green bay of landscape which leads between the two great hills, the bases of which lie perhaps half a mile apart, while their tops are twice as widely separated, I found myself in a charming scene. Outside, I had ridden over an undulating expanse of green and brown, as pasture, grain, or fallow prevailed, and had watched the changing attractions of the landscape, as knoll after knoll sprinkled with clumps of olives and crowned by a flat-roofed hamlet came specially into close view, now here, now yonder. Turning up the Shechem valley, the characteristics changed. Its soft green lay in its setting of lofty hills, the more beautiful for contrast and for the feeling of quiet and security they seem to confer. Nablus nestled about two miles off, under the shadow of the farther side of Gerizim, which rose green on every ledge far up its huge height, while Ebal opposite stood gaunt and bare, except for some terrace-gardens of prickly-pear. But Jacob's well was the supreme attraction. Dismounting, and walking over to it, I found its mouth roughly walled round, with many loose stones lying both inside and outside; and I had to get over the masonry as I best could, to reach the actual excavation. Originally it may have been a hundred and fifty feet deep, and it is still about seventy-five feet deep, but so recently as 1838 it was thirty feet deeper; each year helping to fill it up, from the practice of all who visit it, both natives and travellers, throwing in stones to hear their rebound. This custom, which may be recent, adding to the accumulation of four

thousand years, has filled it up perhaps one-half. The shaft is seven and a half feet in diameter, and the whole work must have been the labour of years, and have been very costly. It is dug first through the alluvial soil, which is lined, throughout—that is, to the depth of about twenty feet—with strong, rough masonry, and then through the living rock, to an unknown depth. The site belongs to the Greek church, which has not the spirit to clear out the shaft and fence it in neatly. The present broken old wall was once part of an arched vault, a portion of the round of which was standing till recent years. Bishop Barclay, in 1881, lifted the covering stone, now over the mouth, and laid bare the circular opening in it, which was grooved, all round, by the ropes used through long ages, to let down and draw up the "water pots." Thus the very days of Christ were brought once more before our eyes. In A.D. 700 there was a cross-shaped small church over the well: the stones lying about being, no doubt, part of its ruins. It was a wonderful undertaking to sink such a well in so remote an age, and shows that Jacob must have lived a long time at Shechem, and that he must have been a really wealthy Arab sheik. To make such a work was rightly thought a greater triumph than to build a castle or a fortress.

But all did not go on peacefully in this sweetest of Palestine valleys. The treacherous sacking of Shechem, with its slaughter of all the men, the leading off the women and children as slaves, and the taking all the cattle and property, speaks at once for the numbers of Jacob's people, and for the deceitful ferocity of some, at least, of his sons.[1]

[1] Reuben does not seem to have taken part in it, perhaps as having a special responsibility as the eldest (xxxvii. 21; xlii. 22); the next eldest, Simeon and Levi,

After such a deed, it was to be feared that the neighbouring tribe-connections of the ruined community might join against the strangers who had acted so cruelly, and hence Jacob determined to leave the district. Yet Shechem seems to have remained permanently in the hands of his people, for it is it apparently which he gave on his death-bed to Joseph; when, with a play on the word used, characteristic of the Hebrews even in their most solemn acts, he assigned him a "portion," or rather "shoulder," more than his brethren: Shechem bearing that meaning.[1] Even in the peaceful Jacob, the fire of a warlike Arab chief seems in a moment to kindle, when he speaks of it as "taken from the hands of the Amorites with his sword and bow."

The vow made when at Bethel more than twenty years before, on his way to Haran, had not yet been honoured, and it was fitting that it should be so, now that Shechem must be left. Since Abraham's day circumcision had marked the Hebrews as the chosen people, in contrast to the Canaanites; but the mere outward consecration to Jehovah was not enough: His exclusive worship was essential to the fulfilment of the national covenant with Him. Rachel's theft of her father's "gods" had shown, of itself, that the idolatry of Haran had a footing in the encampment, and it must be rooted out, if possible. The whole tribe, therefore, was required to give up everything heathen; Rachel, her father's gods or teraphim;[2] others the idols,

were therefore the leaders. The real ground of offence on the part of Shechem was, doubtless, his not belonging to the tribe; no offers of honourable reparation availed anything against the stain of a mixed marriage.

[1] Chap. xlviii. 22. Besides, Joshua goes to Shechem without any notice of having needed to conquer it. Josh. viii. 30–35. See Michaelis, *Mosaisches Recht*, vol. i. p. 126.

[2] The word used is teraphim, which seem to have been originally figures, generally of small size, and of hideous form, which were supposed to frighten away evil spirits from the house in which they were honoured. A small image in the Louvre, sup-

which, it seems, they cherished; and those who had them, the ear-rings and armlets,[1] used as idolatrous charms; and the whole, when gathered, were buried under the oak at Shechem; known hitherto as that beneath which Abraham's tent had been pitched, but henceforth as the "oak of the magicians."[2] A formal religious purification of the person and all raiment was likewise enforced, in preparation for a renewed consecration of the whole community to the worship of the God of Bethel alone, at that venerated sanctuary.

The later years of the patriarch breathe a spirit of religious fidelity becoming such an act. At Bethel he builds an altar alongside the memorial stone raised to Him who "answered him in the day of his distress, and was with him in the way which he went," and consecrated it by a drink offering and anointing. But this devotion was soon disturbed by the shadow of trouble. Rebekah was dead, but Deborah, the nurse of her childhood and her bosom friend to the last, had come to close her days in the tents of the

posed to be a teraphim, is a frightful demon in its upper part, with the body of a dog, the feet of an eagle, hands armed with lion's claws, a scorpion's tail, a skeleton head with the flesh half off but the eyes remaining, goat's horns rising above, and four wings stretching round. This image was to be placed at the door or window, to turn back any demon. Lenormant's *La Magie*, p. 48. M. Botta found others at Khorsabad, in holes specially prepared for them, under the pavement before the gates of the palace. They were small images of baked clay, of forms as frightful as that of the one at the Louvre. See quotation in full, in Mill's *Nablus*, p. 51. Teraphim is a plural form, perhaps from their always, apparently, consisting of parts of different beings. The root seems to mean "to strike with fear," but Gesenius (*Thesaurus*, p. 1518) gives a different origin. The worship of teraphim continued in Israel till the exile (Ewald's *Alt.*, p. 256; *Gesch.*, vol. i. p. 462), but the subject will be better treated at a later period. One is reminded, while on this subject, of the name of Germanicus, graven on lead talismans, magic characters, and other enchantments, found on the ground and round the walls of that doomed man's house, and regarded even by Tacitus as bearing on his death. *Annal.*, ii. 49.

[1] It is curious to note that our word cameo is the Aramaic Kamea = an amulet, worn to guard the person from magical charms. See *Amulete*, in Winer and Riehm. Ear-rings were worn for the same purpose. They were apparently engraved with magical characters or idolatrous signs. We read in Hos. ii. 13, of "ear-rings of Baalim."

[2] Judg. ix. 37. Translated in our version, "The plain of Meonenim."

favourite son; and now she also passed away amidst such general grief, that the tree under which she was buried received the name of the "oak of weeping."

A still greater trial, however, was near. After perhaps fifteen or sixteen years from the birth of Joseph, Rachel died, at the birth of a second son, and Jacob had to bury her "in the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem. And

RACHEL'S SEPULCHRE.

Jacob set a pillar upon her grave: that is the pillar of Rachel's grave unto this day." It has long disappeared, but a tomb, raised apparently on the same spot, still preserves its memory. It rises on the under side of the way, as you go from Bethlehem to Jerusalem, not far beyond the turn leading from the former; and, until a generation ago, was a simple domed square, of smoothed stone, exactly like, in shape, the small domed buildings raised by the Moslems

on many hill-tops in the country, in honour of legendary saints. Latterly a structure, flat roofed, behind, as high almost as the spring of the dome, has been erected, which is now plastered, though the cement is not in very good condition. The original tomb can no longer be seen, but the spot is for ever sacred. The four square walls are each about twenty-three feet long and twenty high; the dome rising ten feet higher. The stones used, unlike those of the original building inside, are rough, though set in rows; and there is no attempt at finish or even straight lines. How old the present tomb is may be questioned, but it is not, apparently, older than the twelfth century. Within the high walls, which join on to the main structure, is a covered court used by the Moslems for prayer, and under the dome is an empty tomb, apparently modern, before which the Jews make supplications, on Fridays. The pillar raised by Jacob, called by the same name, I may say, as the stone he raised at Bethel, has long since disappeared, but the memory of Rachel will be for ever green under whatever monument her ashes lie.

How tenderly Jacob loved her, whom he lost so unexpectedly, and so tenderly even to the last hour of his life, appears in repeated touches. Her infant is to her "as her soul was in departing," Benoni—"the son of my anguish;" but to his father he is Benjamin, "the son of his right hand," that is, of his good fortune. At the loss of his son Joseph he "refuses to be comforted and will go down into the grave,[1] to my son, mourning;" and, in his last words to Joseph's sons, before he died in Egypt, forty years after her

[1] The grave = Sheol, the region of the dead is the word used. It means "the hollow." In Job xi. 8, the depth of Sheol is said to be only less wonderful than "the depth" (perfection) "of God" (ver. 7). The Shades of the dead were there, in darkness (Job x. 22).

death, he repeats the whole story of her being taken away from him, as tenderly as if it had happened but yesterday.

Moving his desolate tent only a little way from the grave, to "the watch-tower of the flocks,"[1] he rested for a time near a spot so holy; then, moved on slowly to Hebron: "for the children were tender, and the flocks and herds with young were with him, and if men should overdrive them one day, all the flock would die."[2] There, in the scenes of his youth and boyhood, he once more saw his father; and with him, or near, he stayed, dutifully, till the old man died. Esau had long ago finally left Canaan, preferring the rough mountains of Seir, with their life of adventure and plunder, to the quiet monotony of pastoral or agricultural toil; but he and Jacob met once more at the burial of Isaac in the Cave of Machpelah, beside Abraham, Sarah, and Rebekah.

Always as much inclined to sow and reap, as to follow a pastoral life[3]—for Isaac's fields and sheaves, long ago, in Gerar, had turned his tastes that way—Jacob settled down in the district dear to him from the memories of his youth, and "dwelt in the land wherein his father was a stranger." Thence, however, his flocks were led far and near, as pasture offered, for we find them as far north as Shechem. It was in the pastures of its broad valley that Joseph found his brethren when sent from his father at Hebron, to ask after their welfare, but it was not till he had gone far north to Dothan, or Dothain, "the two wells," on the uplands north of Samaria, that he found them. The country there is a succession of low hills, gentle slopes, and equally gentle hollows, all open still, as they apparently were then, and all covered with better or poorer pasture, though at its best

[1] Mic. iv. 8. Migdal Edar. [2] Chap. xxxiii. 13. [3] Chap. xxxvii. 7.

the pasture land of Canaan bears no comparison to that of England or Ireland. A track reaches across the undulating gray-brown landscape towards Ramleh, whence it runs on to Gaza and ultimately to Egypt. It comes to Dothan from Damascus, caravans travelling on it crossing the Jordan at the Beisan ford, then climbing to the plain of Esdraelon, from which it enters the uplands of Samaria

SHEPHERDS' REFUGE TOWER.

From "*L'Egypte—Etat Modern.*"

through the defile where King Ahaziah, fleeing for his life, was overtaken and murdered by the emissaries of Jehu.

It was along this road that the camels were stalking on their way to Egypt when Joseph was with his brethren. Syrians commanded a high price on the Nile as slaves, and this may have raised the idea of selling the hated visitor to this distant market. He would never be heard of again, and meanwhile they would get a good price for him. Al-

most every traveller will see, as he passes on, some camels on their way from beyond Jordan to Egypt, with oil or spices; I myself, for example, having watched a long string of these huge creatures wending along that route, through Dothan, laden with huge black skins of oil and bags of grain; the counterpart of the Ishmaelite caravan which appeared that day and decided Joseph's destiny. The two wells are still in existence in the valley, one of them even now bearing the name of the "pit of Joseph." It is about three feet in diameter and at least thirty feet deep, the walls lined with masonry, but the bottom hewn out of the rock. Yet, as the water in it never dries up, it is hard to imagine that it can be the actual well into which Joseph was cast. Dothan now shows little more than a wilderness of cactus or prickly-pear bushes, yet within even a few years past it was richly planted with citrons, oranges, and pomegranates, but they were destroyed by some troops sent from Nablus, to quell a local disturbance.

The close of Jacob's life saw the second temporary immigration of the Hebrews to Egypt—this time to stay there for centuries. But this wider sphere belongs to a future chapter. The valley of the Nile was destined, in Providence, to be the shelter and nursery of Israel till it should grow from a tribe to a nation. "Fear not," said the Divine voice in a vision, "to go down into Egypt, for I will there make of thee a great nation; I will go down with thee into Egypt, and I will also surely bring thee up again, and Joseph will put his hand upon thine eyes," to close them in death. Thither, therefore, over the uplands of Be-ersheba, and through the gates of the frontier wall, the patriarch went; to meet his long-lost son again, and to stand before the great Pharaoh. And there, in the fulness of time, when

he felt himself dying, he left the command, in striking illustration of his abiding trust in the covenant of God with his race, that his bones should not rest in the gorgeous sepulchres of the Nile, but beside those of his fathers in the Cave of Machpelah; a pledge to his descendants of their future inheritance of the land of which their leaders had thus in death taken possession.

CHAPTER XIX.

JOSEPH.

The return of Jacob to Canaan was the first great step towards the formation of a Hebrew people. Hitherto there had been only individuals of the race; but with the family of Jacob it branched into numerous heads of the future tribes of Israel. The formal and solemn acceptance of the traditional faith of Abraham, by these at Bethel, determined henceforth the history of Israel as identified with the perpetuation and spread among mankind of the great doctrine of the Unity of God, and of the high standard of life which was known as "the way of Jehovah."[1] They had already been separated from the idolatrous nations around by circumcision—a sign of dedication to God borne about on their persons—and had come to regard it as a badge of proud superiority.[2] Everything which connected them with idolatry had been ignominiously buried beneath the oak at Moreh; and, at Bethel, they had, further, solemnly forsworn it as a community. If Abraham was the first preacher of God and His righteousness, the honour is due to Jacob of first having established the great patriarch's belief as the accepted faith of the Hebrew race.

But Canaan offered no facilities for the development of the nationality thus begun, while in the neighbouring

[1] Gen. xviii. 19. [2] Gen. xxxiv. 14.

Egypt, the great oasis of Arab geography, every condition was at hand. Thither, therefore, in the all-wise Providence of God, the embryo people were transferred, and that by an agency the most unlikely to bring it about—the sale of one brother by the others, as a slave, to a passing Ishmaelite caravan.

The story of Joseph is too universally known to need recapitulation in detail, but the illustrations it affords of Eastern and Egyptian manners are at once so interesting, and so confirmatory of the Bible narrative, that they may well command our attention. Intended to follow the shepherd life, Joseph first comes before us as learning the craft, under his half brothers,[1] the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah, and incurring their hatred by letting their father know their manner of life. Only seventeen, and alike simple and pure, he was naturally a favourite with Jacob, now at least a hundred years old, and he was still more so as the elder son of his best loved and now lost wife, Rachel. Nor did the fond weakness of old age try to hide his partiality, for while all his other sons had the common shepherd's coat, reaching to the knees only, he had one reaching to the ancles, with sleeves to the wrists,[2] and very possibly of fine Egyptian linen. Though not necessarily implied in the Hebrew words used, it may have been of "many" colours, for in the tomb at Beni Hassan, Semitic visitors are seen dressed in robes of white, red, and blue, apparently made of a patchwork of separate small pieces. It is, moreover, usual

[1] The words "the lad was with," are translated, "and he was a servant with," by Gesenius and Knobel.

[2] "*Not* a coat of *many colours*." Kamphausen, arts. "Farben," "Kleider," in Riehm. Ges., *Thes.*, p. 1117 *a*, a garment long and full, worn by the children of nobles. Or, perhaps a particoloured robe, with sleeves, and reaching to the feet. Jos., *Ant.*, vii. 8, 1. 2 Sam. xiii. 18.

still in the East to dress favourite children in this way. Purple, scarlet, and other colours are pieced together with great taste, or the jackets worn are embroidered with gold, and silk of different shades.[1] The Turks at Haleb, Rauwulf tells us, have the same custom with their growing sons.[2] Such a dress of honour may have seemed to foreshadow Joseph's being made the heir, especially as Reuben and the elder sons had lost their father's favour by their misconduct. In any case, it roused jealous anger, which was only to be abated by the lad's death or his being sent away. The incident of the pit[3] is quite in keeping with Eastern customs, for underground cisterns abounded in Palestine, and, when dry, were so often used for a dungeon—escape from them being impossible,[4] from their frequently bottle-like shape—that the Hebrew word for them also means a prison.[5] The passage of an Arab caravan towards Egypt,[6] and its purchase of Joseph, is

[1] T. Smith's *Joseph*, p. 1. Roberts' *Oriental Illustrations*.

[2] Rosenmüller, *A. und N. Morgenland*, vol. i. p. 174.

[3] They agree not to put him to a violent death, but to leave him in the dry rain-cistern to starve to death.

[4] The Canaanites had already dug many such cisterns (Deut. vi. 11) over the whole land (Neh. ix. 25). Towns, fields, and pastures alike needed them in a country largely dependent on rain-water as Palestine always was. Agriculture and grazing also imperatively required them, and hence any one who devoted himself largely to these had to dig many, as in the case of King Uzziah (2 Chron. xxvi. 10). The Moabite Stone of King Meza orders every house in Korcha Dibon to have one to catch the rain-water. It was such a cistern as that into which Joseph was put that Jeremiah had for a dungeon (Jer. xxxviii. 6. Lam. iii. 53). They were generally covered over with a great stone. Winer. Riehm, art. "Brunnen." The number of ancient cisterns and grain pits in Palestine is even now wonderfully great: I found them wherever I went, through the country. The surface water was the great reliance for necessary supplies from the earliest historical times, so that Canaan was always what it is now, a very waterless land so far as running streams or springs were concerned.

[5] Exod. xii. 29. Isa. xxiv. 22. Jer. xxxvii. 16.

[6] The name "Midianites" is used for the caravan as well as "Ishmaelites"—as equivalent to "trader"—just as the word "Canaanite" is similarly used. Both peoples, moreover, were descendants of Abraham, and Arabs. "One needs to go to Egypt," says Ebers, ". . . to see the brown-skinned children of Ishmael, who brought camels richly laden from the East to the Nile. They are there drawn to the life on the monuments."

equally true to early times, and to the unchanging Eastern life of to-day. Sir Samuel Baker's boy, Saat, had, in the same way as Joseph, been carried off, while he was tending goats, by an Arab caravan; hidden in a gum sack, and finally taken to Cairo and sold as a slave.[1] "All the world may perish, so far as we care," said an Arab to Niebuhr, "if only Egypt remains." And it was left to them even more in Joseph's day than now, from the dislike of Egyptians to leave their country even for purposes of gain. The trade in "spices" was exceptionally great between the valley of the Nile and neighbouring countries; from the quantity used for embalming mummies, for burning as incense, or as disinfectants; for which they were in great repute. Even the names of the first and second of the three spices named, gum tragacanth,[2] from Lebanon and Palestine generally, Armenia and Persia; balsam from the balsam-tree of Gilead; and ladanum—the gum collected still from the leaves of the cistus-rose—from Syria and Arabia, have been found in the list of 200 drugs named in the temple-laboratory of Edfu; for each temple had its laboratory and apothecary.[3] Even the twenty

[1] Baker's *Albert Nyanza*, p. 85.

[2] Translated "spicery" in our version.

[3] Ebers' *Ægypten*, etc., pp. 290 ff. Dümichen, *Tempelinschriften, Edfu.*, Taf. 52–75. *Geographische Inschriften*, Taf. 80–100. The trade with Egypt, as shown by the vegetable remains found in the tombs near the pyramids, included, amongst other things, juniper berries from Phœnicia; cedar-wood for sarcophagi, wooden images, etc.; cedar and pine resin; gums to bind the mummy cloths; myrrh, incense. The Great Harris Papyrus recounts among the gifts presented by Rameses III. to the temples, immense quantities of incense, wax, oil, perfumes, honey, etc., etc. The list, in endless variety, fills twenty-four pages of *Records of the Past*, vol. vi. pp. 23 ff.

The very names of two of the three "spices" carried to Egypt by Joseph's caravan are named in the papyri—the balm and the gum tragacanth—the same words being used for them as in the Hebrew Bible. Ladanum, the third mentioned in Genesis, is often found in the mummy cases, and its odour may be detected among those of other materials used in embalming the mummies. These three substances, moreover, are still principal articles of commerce between the East and Egypt. Vigouroux, vol. ii. p. 17.

pieces of silver given for Joseph are exactly the price fixed under Moses as that of a male slave between five and twenty years of age;[1] so nearly had human beings kept the same value for centuries.

The existence of slavery in Egypt is strikingly illustrated by countless pictures of slaves of both sexes, and of every colour, on the monuments, and still more so by the existence to this day of manuscripts in which disconsolate owners offer rewards to any who will bring back fugitive slaves. One of these is an advertisement by Prince Atefamen, a son of Rameses II., the great task-master of the Jews before the Exodus; and it is further certain that among these slaves were Hebrews and others of Semitic blood,[2] since under Rameses II. the Hebrew word for slave —ĕbed—is often used, and we read of Syrian slaves[3] who, indeed, were prized more than any others, as was afterwards the case in Greece and Rome. It was therefore a fortunate chance for the Ishmaelites to secure Joseph, a Syrian, for the Egyptian market. The special value of such slaves is strikingly shown by the fact that in the treaty of Rameses II. with the Khetas, we find a clause providing that fugitives, who might flee to Syria, should be sent back to Egypt,[4] and there still remains a letter of a scribe to his father, the prophet Ramessu, of Hermopolis, telling all his adventures in an attempt to recover a runaway.[5]

The name of Potiphar, the Egyptian by whom Joseph

[1] Lev. xxvii. 5.

[2] Syrian slaves sold in the bazaars of Memphis or Thebes were in special demand, and brought a very high price. Syrians and negroes were used, among other ways, to run before their master's chariot in the streets; a gold cane in their hand, or a whip, guiding the horses and clearing the way, as every one who has been at Cairo must have seen daily.

[3] Ebers, p. 294. Riehm, 760.

[4] *Maspero*, p. 223.

[5] Chabas, *Mélanges Égyptologiques*, third series, vol. i. p. 231. Soury, in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* (15th Feb., 1875), p. 808.

was bought, is strictly Egyptian, and means one "dedicated to Ra," the Sun-god, or, "the gift of the Risen One;" whose worship had its great centre at Heliopolis, in the south of Lower Egypt, close to Memphis, the favourite residence of the Pharaoh of Joseph's time, a great patron of the worship of Ra. The court of this king, like that of the other Pharaohs, abounded with officials of every kind—Privy Councillors, King's Relations, Masters of the Horse, Directors of the Court Music, Astrologers and Interpreters of Dreams, Librarians, Ministers of Public Buildings and of Tombs, Chiefs of the Palace, Treasurers of the Household and of the Kingdom; and, not to make the list too long, royal Fan-bearers, who seem to have been the highest civil officers of the Court and to have stood at the Pharaoh's right hand. On the left side, as the unprotected and weak one, stood the chief military officers, who formed a kind of special bodyguard, though there was also a force of guards, 2,000 men strong, who were better paid than the soldiers of the line. But Potiphar could scarcely have been head of this force, as it was changed each year, while he lived permanently at Memphis. It seems, rather, that he was at the head of what we may call the Egyptian State police, which formed one of the corps of the army, though largely employed in civil duties.[1]

This body was already numerous and well organized in very ancient times, and had very extensive duties; for it was the law that every citizen had to appear yearly before the Police Superintendent of his district, and show how he made his living; any false statement being punished with death.

In Egypt, as in the Austria of to-day, everything was

[1] Vigouroux, vol. ii. p. 28.

written down. The whole population of each "Nomos," or district, gathered under its standard, were enrolled singly by scribes in a register, on a fixed day; even the slaves being thus entered on the official lists. There is, indeed, a picture of such a yearly assembling, on one of the monuments of the Nineteenth Dynasty.[1] Nor was this more than a small part of the duties of the State police. They were charged with the detection and punishment of criminals; the pursuit and recapture of fugitive slaves; the safe watching of the countless prisoners of war; and the due execution of the forced labour of the people on public works, and of the toil of the State slaves at their set tasks. Duties so varied required a large body of men, and hence, besides scribes and officials charged with administering punishments, there had been organized, at least as early as the time of Abraham, a kind of gendarmerie corps, originally of foreigners; and with these were joined other bands of foreign soldiery, raised from Sardinia and elsewhere, who formed part of the personal state and protection of the Pharaoh. Over the whole there was necessarily a head officer, who, like the chiefs of other departments of government, was attached to the court, under the sounding title of "the two eyes of the King of Upper, and the two ears of the King of Lower Egypt."

It is probable that this was the dignity held by Potiphar, for it would give him precisely the duties which we find assigned to him—the charge of prisoners and prisons, and of bodily punishments and executions.[2]

The position of Joseph, as head over all the slaves in his

[1] Wilkinson, vol. ii. p. 33.

[2] Ebers, pp. 295–303. Ebers' *Königstochter*, vol. i. p. 205, n. 23; vol. ii. p. 6, n. 7. Riehm, p. 760. Dillmann calls him "Captain of the palace guard." *Genesis*, on the verse.

master's house, and over all the household affairs, was one which constantly presents itself from the earliest times on the monuments and in the literature of Egypt. Every great family had a slave thus placed over all the rest, and, indeed, Joseph himself, after his elevation, had such a majordomo. Wherever grain is being measured, or metal weighed, or building or agricultural work is going forward, the paintings show us the head-overseer of the household with a short rod in his hand, or with a writing tablet in his hand and a pen behind his ear; to take down the number of sheaves, or of casks, or of the cattle or flocks; and, like Joseph, he is expressly described as the "overseer." There were under-overseers of slaves, of the herds, etc., but the chief under whom all stood ranked very much higher than his subordinates, and was honoured by the special title of "governor of the house." In one papyrus, a "head-overseer of the cattle" is mentioned, who, stirred by ambition, betakes himself to magic, and comes to a sad end; and there is hardly a tomb of the rich, in the wall paintings of which we do not meet with counterparts of Joseph's position in the household of Potiphar.[1]

These strange palaces of the dead, in fact, bring before us continually the economy of great Egyptian establishments, such as he had to superintend in all its departments; for his office set him not only over the interior of the house, but over the varied labours of the field and of the estate. Nor was it a slight responsibility; for Egyptian courtiers were often immensely rich, and not a few of them take care to tell us in their tomb-inscriptions exactly the number of their cattle of every kind. One, for example, states that

[1] Prisse d'Avennes, *Monuments Egyptiens* (1847), pl. 41. Wilkinson, vol. ii. p. 136. Hengstenberg, *Die Bücher Moses'*, p. 23. Ebers, p. 304.

he had 835 oxen, 220 cows and calves, 760 asses, 2,235 goat-like sheep, and 974 goats; while another boasts of having possessed 405 cattle of one kind, 1,237 of a second, 1,360 of a third, 1,220 calves, and so on, while his geese, ducks, and doves were numbered by thousands.[1] Country houses and gardens are shown by the tombs to have been an especial delight of the wealthy, and these mansions have so many storehouses in them that an overseer was evidently indispensable. Rooms are seen full of flagons, jars, and vessels of every shape and of the most varied contents—gold and silver plate, dried fish, bread, bars of metal, etc.[2] In such a huge establishment the clear head and high principle of a man like Joseph would be invaluable, and it is only what might have been expected when we read that "seeing he had him, Potiphar concerned himself about nothing"[3] except his food, which the strict Egyptian laws of ceremonial cleanness and uncleanness would not permit a foreigner, especially of the Shepherd caste, to touch.

The relation of husband and wife, as implied in the story of Potiphar's wife, has been objected to as not in keeping with a state of society like that of the Egyptians. But the paintings on the tombs and temples show with how little reason this criticism has been made. So far from being secluded from each other, the two sexes sat together at their parties and mingled freely in daily life, as I have often seen in the Tomb pictures. In one of these the guests, of both sexes, sit, in company, in their best adornment, each smelling a lotos flower; while a female slave hands round the cup. The buffet is laden with every delicacy—fruits, pastry, cooked fowl, and jars of many kinds of drinks;

[1] Brugsch, *Gräberwelt*, p. 47.
[2] Wilkinson, vol. ii. p. 129. Ebers, p. 304.
[3] Gen. xxxix. 6.

naked female dancers, meanwhile, entertaining the party with their skill, to the music of a band of women, one of whom is playing on a flute, while the others set the time by measured clapping of their hands, accompanied, it is likely, with their voices. In the other picture the company is also made up of both ladies and gentlemen. Some slaves are putting necklaces, as ornaments, round the necks of the invited, while others carry napkins, apparently for the use of those whom they may serve, to wipe their lips or hands. Women, indeed, appear to have had exceptional freedom and privileges in Egypt, if we may credit the ancients; for Herodotus says that they went to market while the men sat and wove at home, and that the duty of providing for aged parents lay on the daughters, and not on the sons.[1] Diodorus, moreover, asserts that on the Nile the queen was more honoured than the king, and that wives ruled their husbands, who were required in their marriage contracts to promise due obedience to their spouses![2]—an extraordinary arrangement which the monuments, at least in part, corroborate. In most cases the wife is spoken of as the "mistress of the house," or "the great house mistress," and the name of the mother stands always on a line with that of the father, but frequently before it, while the sons are often named only after their mothers.[3] At many receptions of foreign ambassadors the queen has the precedence. In almost all the graves and mummy papyri, man and wife sit beside each other, as bound to each other not only in this life, but in that beyond; and on countless tomb pictures we see the two sitting on a couch, the husband with his arm

[1] Herod., ii. 35.
[2] Diod., i. 127. See also note on this subject, Ebers' *Königstochter*, vol. i. p. 234.
[3] Ebers, p. 307.

round his wife's neck, or the wife with hers round that of her husband. No boast is more frequent in funeral inscriptions than of the tenderness each felt to the last hour for the other, and wives are lamented as "devoted to their husbands," as "loving him," as "the palm-tree of love" to overshadow him. Reigning queens are mentioned from the earliest times, and not infrequently attained great fame as sovereigns; ranking, like the Pharaohs, even during their life, as divine beings. In death, moreover, women were more honoured than men, for female mummies are as a rule more richly embalmed, adorned, and entombed than those of the other sex,

Marriage was thus as sacred on the Nile as with ourselves. Man and wife ate together and lived together—not in separate chambers as in other Eastern nations—and a divorce was difficult to obtain; while infidelity on either side was one of the mortal sins which the soul had to prove, before the judges of the dead, that it had not committed. There was nothing, therefore, to prevent Joseph and his mistress often meeting in her mansion, and, indeed, his duties may have required him to do so, as in the case of a wonderfully beautiful woman, whom a papyrus represents as going to the temple of Ptah to pray, attended by fifty maidens, in the company of a male slave; doubtless, like Joseph, of high position. Yet concubines and harems were not unknown in Egypt, for the Pharaohs, like all Eastern despots, indulged in this immorality, and had a "house of the women," over which eunuchs were placed; and the dignitaries of the land copied the example. But these mistresses were in no respect on a footing with the lawful wife, who sits beside her husband while the others amuse him as singers and dancers.

That with all the honour paid to marriage, however, cases of painful breach of its duties were only too common in Egypt, is strangely illustrated by the "Story of the Two Brothers,"[1] a tale some centuries older than the Exodus, and thus perhaps contemporary with Joseph himself. It is almost exactly a repetition of the incident of Potiphar's wife, except that the victim is a younger brother of the husband, and suffers even more than Joseph; though in the end raised, like him, for his virtues, to the highest honours, while the wife is, at last, killed and thrown to the dogs by the god Anubis. Egyptian women, as a whole, had, indeed, only too doubtful a name, in spite of the virtues of many: for ancient testimony weighs very heavily to their prejudice.[2] Indeed, the very liberty enjoyed by the sex, amidst influences so corrupting as those of the Egyptian religion, and the strange custom of leaving their right breast exposed, and dressing in fabrics so transparent as to show the whole person through them, were unfavourable to morality. The paintings of the tombs show the delight of Egyptian women in all the elegancies and little vanities of life. We can see from them how a rich matron of Thebes or Memphis spent her mornings. Slaves enter her chamber bringing delicate embroidered tunics, of brilliant colours; boxes of perfumes; caskets filled with bracelets and necklaces; bronze mirrors, and precious little cases. Reclining on a couch of ebony incrusted with ivory, she lets herself be dressed and adorned by her maids. One twists her black hair into small plaits, adding false ones to make up the number which a fashionable head-dress demands; another covers her arms, her ancles, and her bosom with rings, jewels, and amulets; she tries some finger-rings of gold with engraved stones;

[1] Brugsch, *Aus dem Orient* (Berlin, 1864), p. 7. [2] Hitzig's *Geschichte*, p. 57.

chooses the ear-rings which she will wear for the day; and while one slave opens the collyrium boxes and another mixes in the toilet cups the different ingredients for staining the nails, the eye-lashes, and the eye-brows, she listens vaguely, cooled by the soft air of fans, and wooed by the gentle music of lutes, harps, and flutes.[1] No wonder that a life of such effeminacy in the worst sense, should lead to scenes of offensive excess in wine at table among Egyptian ladies, or to others too gross to be described, which I have seen painted on the walls of the Temple of Medineh Abu.

The prison into which Joseph was thrown—"a place where the king's prisoners were bound"—is described in the Hebrew Bible by a word which Delitzsch explains as meaning "the fortress surrounded by a wall," and such a prison, called by them the White Castle, is mentioned by Thucydides[2] and Herodotus,[3] as existing in Memphis, and is found under the same name on many Egyptian inscriptions. Memphis itself, indeed, was known by three names; its common one, Mennefer, "the Haven of the Good;" its sacred one, "the Dwelling of Ptah," for every Egyptian town had a sacred as well as a profane name; and also as "the Town of the White Castle."[4] This citadel comprised the barracks of the garrison, some temples, and especially the prisons, and was under an officer of engineers, known as the Superintendent-in-Chief of the Walls and

[1] Soury, *Études Historiques sur les religions de l'Asie antérieure*, p. 166.

[2] Thuc., i. 104. Dr. Arnold's note tells us that the White Castle of Memphis was the headquarters of the Persian troops in Egypt.

[3] Herod., iii. 13, 91. Ebers' *Ægypten*, p. 311. Stories from Greek legend, parallel to that of Potiphar's wife, may be found in Rosenmüller's *A. und N. Morgenland*, vol. i. p. 185. It is an aggravation of the charge against Joseph that he, a Hebrew, one of the unclean Shepherd race, should have acted so.

[4] The word Memphis is the Coptic name for the city. The Copts are the modern representatives of the ancient Egyptians. The Arabic name is Menf or Menuf. These are only corruptions of Mennefer.

Fortifications of Memphis.[1] Nor was the office an honorary one, for the fortress and defences were so strong that they were reduced by Cambyses, more than a thousand years later, only after a regular siege. Potiphar, as Minister of Police, was, no doubt, the head of the citadel, or "House of the prison," as it is called in the Hebrew of Genesis, the words used being common in the inscriptions, as including the whole aggregate of buildings in any establishment.[2]

THE WHITE CASTLE AT MEMPHIS, IN WHICH JOSEPH WAS CONFINED. FROM THE FAMOUS MOSAIC PAVEMENT AT PRÆNESTE.

In the part of this fortress devoted to prisoners of state, and, as such, more strictly watched than any other, Joseph was imprisoned; ordinary criminals having their cells in other parts of the great building. Potiphar had no power over his life, for the old law of Egypt protected the slave thus far,[3] but he might have mutilated him, or have in-

[1] Brugsch, *Geographische Inschriften*, Taf. 42, p. 1095.

[2] Beth, the Hebrew word for house, which has this wide signification, is very common in the inscriptions, having no doubt been adopted from the Semitic races of Canaan, with whom the Egyptians were frequently at war. It is found in the Egyptian lists of conquered Canaanitish cities, before the entrance of the Hebrews into Egypt. The other word, Sohar, is an Egyptian one.

[3] Soury, p. 165.

flicted a thousand blows of the stick on him had he chosen; the fact that he did neither showing that, while he could not quite disbelieve his wife's story, he was still so prepossessed in Joseph's favour that he left it to time to show how the truth really lay.

But even the suspicious eyes of the jailer soon saw the innocence of the prisoner, and hence he was erelong as high in favour with him as he had been with Potiphar, a result which, strangely enough, in the end brought about his deliverance.

The king's cupbearer, and the chief of his bakers,[1] who had fallen into disgrace and were confined in the same building as Joseph, are shown by the Egyptian records to have been very high officials; for both had the responsible duty of protecting the king's life from poison. The post of the former, in particular, gave him constant and confidential access to the Pharaoh, who drank only what he received from his hand; while the other had not only to oversee the due supply of the court with the endless cakes and bakemeats in which Egyptians delighted, but to take care that they were not tampered with for traitorous ends.

Numerous inscriptions show the great importance attached by the Egyptians to dreams. In one, the Prince of Bachtan is recorded as having sent back to Egypt, in consequence of a dream, the god Chunsu, which the Pharaoh had sent him to cure his daughter.[2] Another states how King Menephtah had a dream before a battle, in which the god Ptah placed himself before him, and forbade him to advance.[3] An inscription discovered in the ruins of Na-

[1] Both Potiphar and these two high officials are called eunuchs in the Hebrew, but this may have been merely a name of office.

[2] Stele of Rameses II. in the Bibliothèque Nationale of Paris.

[3] Chabas, *Études*, p. 214. Dümichen, *Historische Inschriften*, Taf. 3.

pata, relates how the Pharaoh Miamun, in the year of his elevation to the throne of Egypt and Ethiopia, dreamed that he saw two serpents; one on his right hand and the other on his left. Awaking, he demanded that his wise men should come and interpret it on the moment, and this they did as follows: "You possess the south, and the north will submit to you. The diadems of the two will shine on your head, and you will rule over all the land in its length and in its breadth."[1] Dreams were regarded as sent by the god Thoth, and it was so great a matter to obtain them that recipes are still extant telling how they may be secured. It was natural, therefore, that the two disgraced officials should be greatly excited to find out the meaning of the supposed Divine communications that had been sent them. Cut off as they were by the prison walls from the priests who alone interpreted dreams, they would doubtless be only too glad to avail themselves of such irregular help as the presence of Joseph promised to afford.

Nothing could be more perfectly Egyptian than the cupbearer seeing in his sleep a vine with three branches, which presently blossomed, and then hung thick with ripened clusters; grapes from which he pressed into Pharaoh's cup. Even in the Old Empire, before the Hyksos or Shepherd Kings, both the vine, and its juice used as a beverage, were familiar in the valley of the Nile. The tombs at the pyramids, which are much older than the time of Joseph, show not only richly laden vines in process of being picked into baskets,[2] but also the preparation of the grape juice, from its being pressed out of the clusters to the storing it in jars. At Beni Hassan, the tomb walls, which date from the Old

[1] Soury, *Études sur les Religions*, p. 170. Lenormant, *La Divination*, p. 144.
[2] Wilkinson, vol. i. p. 41.

Empire, show a very curious wine-press—a kind of sack fixed between upright posts and filled with grapes, which give off their juice into a vessel below on the sack being twisted round at one end, as women wring clothes in washing.[1] In the tombs at Thebes we have a picture of a great garden with a vineyard in the middle, in which a boy scares off the birds from the ripe grapes, while men, singing as they work, tread out with their naked feet the clusters heaped into a huge vat. Overhead is a roof with hanging ropes, to which the men cling as they spring up and down on the yielding mass, the juice meanwhile flowing through two openings into jars on the ground. The master stands by while these are counted, entered in a book, and placed closely side by side in his cellar;[2] under the care of an image of the asp, or good demon, the protecting deity of the storeroom. That this juice, moreover, was used after fermentation as well as before, is only too clearly shown by the pictures of the feasts already mentioned, for even women are seen in them, with the doubled-up lotos flower, the sign of drunkenness, hanging over their arm, or led out, offensively sick, by a female slave.[3] Nor are the men more temperate, for one is being carried away resting on the *heads* of three slaves, while another is being taken home most uncomfortably,—his head resting on the chest of one slave, his heels on the shoulders of another.[4] Workmen had rations of bread and wine allowed them, and there was a fixed allowance of two kinds for the priests. At the town of Bubastis, moreover, on the edge of Goshen, a yearly carnival at the great sanctuary of Pacht or Sechet attracted

[1] Wilkinson, vol. i. p. 45 [2] Wilkinson, vol. i. pp.4 6, 47. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 52.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 53. Tristram's *Nat. Hist. of Bible*, p. 403. Michaelis, *Mos. Recht*, vol. iv. p. 79.

often seven hundred thousand people, who drank more while it lasted than they did all the year besides.[1] Another similar festivity was held yearly at the temple of Hathor, the goddess of love, at Denderah, which bore the significant name of the drinking feast; the goddess herself bearing among other names that of "the goddess of drunkenness," or even "the drunken."[2] "The people of Denderah are drunk with wine," says an inscription, speaking of this feast.[3] Still more, Rameses III., in his record of his gifts to the gods, reminds those of Thebes that he gave them numberless vineyards, and many gardeners, from the captives of all lands, to cultivate them; and this he repeated to those of other parts. Nor did it hinder his adding gifts of nearly 200,000 jars of wine to the various temples.

Where wine and its use were divinely sanctioned, no class could well be prohibited from it. Drunkenness, indeed, was denounced as strongly as among ourselves. A drunkard was called "a temple without a god," or "a house without bread," and men were earnestly warned to shun indulgence. Yet too many drank till "they knew nothing, and could not even speak."[4] The kings, however, whose whole life was regulated by the priests, had their allowance of wine and the kinds permitted them fixed by these spiritual guides;[5] but a despot is not easily kept within bounds, however it may have been with the particular Pharaoh whose beverage, in the cupbearer's dream, was only grape juice fresh from the cluster.[6] But that this is a literally

[1] Herodotus, ii. 37, 60, 122, 168, 133. Ebers' *Durch Gosen*, pp. 18, 182, 480. *Königstochter*, vol. i. p. 228, n. 132; vol. ii. p. 261, n. 73.

[2] Ebers' *Ægypten*, p. 326. *Records of Past*, vol. vi. pp. 23-70.

[3] Dümichen's *Bau-urkunde*, p. 29. [4] Papyrus, quoted by Ebers, p. 326.

[5] *Königstochter*, vol. i. n. 39.

[6] The drinking cups of the rich Egyptians were often very costly. They were made of gold, alabaster, fine-glazed clay, or glass, and were often of the most elegant shapes.

correct trait of Egyptian life has been curiously illustrated by a text discovered by Ebers in the inscriptions of the Temple of Edfu, in which the king is seen standing, cup in hand, while underneath are the words, "They press grapes into the water, and the king drinks." [1]

EGYPTIAN BAKING.

a and *e* are ovens. *a* is being cleaned out. That at *e* is kindled and ready for use, the flames coming out at the top. Ovens of this shape are still used in the East, and bear the same name—Tannur—as in Gen. xv. 17. See p. 292 *n*. They are sometimes made of brickwork, at others of earthenware, daubed with mud or plaster to retain the heat. The one at *e* illustrates Gen. xv. 17, the words "a smoking furnace" there, being literally "a smoking Tannur." At *d* bread is being baked on a plate of metal or in an open hollow pan, a method so simple that it is still much used by the Arabs and others for the thin cakes which they commonly make. At *b* and *c* men are making dough into cakes, and at *f* a man is bearing the cakes or loaves *on his head* to the oven.

The dream of the chief baker is no less true to Egyptian life, even in its details. The "baskets of white bread," [2] find their justification alike in the pictures and inscriptions and in the remains found in the tombs. The temples received tributes of wheat from the earliest times, and the kings at their coronation cut off some ears of standing grain, and presented them to the gods, as the chief product of the land. Mummy wheat is also found constantly in the oldest tombs; and,

[1] *Durch Gosen*, p. 480. Naville, *Textes relatifs au mythe d'Horus*, pl. 21, 23.

[2] Proper translation. Joseph plays on the words "lift up." The head of the baker was "lifted up" in a very different sense from that of the "butler."

strange to say, it has been found in the lake dwellings of Switzerland, which it could hardly have reached except through Phœnician traders at Marseilles.[1] Indeed, huge wheatfields are seen in the pictures of the Egyptian heaven.

Even so trifling a detail as the bakemeats being said to have been carried on the head, is no less true to Egyptian life, for while the monuments show that men carried their burdens less often on their heads than otherwise, bakers are a marked exception; and, indeed, even at this time the cakes and confectionery used at the Khedive's table, are carried to the palace, from the kitchen in which they are made, in baskets, on the heads of special servants. A papyrus, of the age when the Hebrews were in Egypt, names four of the Pharaoh's bakers, of whom one is always called "the chief," and the importance of his office may be judged from the fact that no fewer than 114,064 loaves are said to have been delivered by him at a particular time to the royal storerooms.[2] Strange to say, we have also a notice of the bread made in the citadel where Joseph was confined; for one text speaks of "the bread baked in the White Castle" at Memphis.

The doom of the baker, to be beheaded and then have his body stuck upon a pole and left to be eaten by the birds, was the hardest that could be inflicted on an Egyptian, and shows special guilt, real or alleged, on the part of the unfortunate victim. To let the body be destroyed was fatal to all hopes of a happy eternity, for its preservation was essential to a continued existence after death. Beheading, preceded by beating with sticks, was a common punishment; but refusal of embalmment was only pronounced

[1] Desor, *Pfahlbauten des Neuenburger Sees*, p. 43.
[2] Pleyte, *Le papyrus Rollin* (Paris, 1868).

against extraordinary offenders.[1] To leave the body to be eaten by the dogs was the most terrible item in the punishment of the treacherous wife in the "Tale of the Two Brothers."

The birthday of Pharaoh, on which the cupbearer and the chief baker had their very different gaol discharge, was a great festivity on the Nile; for even to the common people the hour of birth, on which astrologers were always consulted where means allowed, was a time of supreme interest. Birthdays generally, were, among all classes in antiquity, kept with great rejoicing, especially those of kings. That of the king of Persia was known as the "perfect day," and an inscription, of the time of the Exodus, tells us of Rameses II., that his birthday caused joy in heaven.[2] The priests of every class assembled in the temples, an amnesty was granted to prisoners, and a great feast was held, worthy of a monarch who was worshipped as a god by his subjects. Under colour of recalling the glories of the past year, the priesthood took the opportunity of renewing their hold on him by flattering but significant addresses; after which, surrounded by all his court and the dignitaries of the temples, he dispensed his grace or frowns as he thought fit.

The two dreams of Pharaoh are full of interest. The Nile, as elsewhere, is called only "the river,"[3] needing no other name in an Egyptian incident; just as the Euphrates is similarly honoured when the scene is in its neighbourhood.[4] In the first dream, seven "well favoured and fat-

[1] Dillmann, p. 424. Ebers' *Ægypten*, p. 334.

[2] Ebers' *Königstochter*, vol. i. p. 22, n. 40; vol. ii. p. 257. Chabas, *Inscriptions des Mines d'Or*, p. 3. Dillmann, p. 424.

[3] The Egyptian word meaning this is used.

[4] See lists of texts in Stanley's *Sinai and Palestine*, Appendix, p. 34.

fleshed" buffaloes—the Egyptian sacred number—which had been wallowing in the shallow water of the river's edge, come to the "lip" of the stream, to feed on the succulent reeds and sedge of the marshy brink, in which cattle still delight; but only to be eaten up by seven others, "ill favoured and lean-fleshed," which presently come up, after them, out of the river. The wheat of the second dream, with seven ears on the one stalk, is the many-eared variety, or mummy wheat, still grown in the Delta; and the east wind which blasted the second stalk and its ears, is the Khamsin, or burning south-east wind, which too often even at this day shrivels the growing corn, leaving it withered and empty. That it is said to blow from the east instead of the south-east is natural, for the Hebrews spoke only of "the four winds of the earth,"[1] and hence reckoned south-east as east, as the Greeks classed the east wind under the name of the southern, and the west under that of the north.

That the number of the cows should have been seven is a singular touch of true local colouring, recognized only within a few years, but affording a striking proof of the exactness of the whole incident in its illustration of Egyptian modes of thought and life. Isis is often seen associated with seven cows; a mystical number represented by the same word in Egyptian, Hebrew, and Sanscrit.[2] So, also, Osiris is at times represented as attended by seven cows, his wives.[3] At the summer solstice a cow was led seven times round his temple. That those in the dream should have been bathing in the Nile is, moreover, only a reproduction of paintings often seen on the monuments.

[1] Rev. vii. 1.

[2] Egyptian *Sefeh*, Hebrew *Seba*, Sanscrit *Sapt*

[3] De Rougé, *Revue Archæologique* (Feb., 1869), p. 94.

Want and abundance depend absolutely in Egypt, to-day, as of old, on the rise of the Nile. The culture of the land must ever go hand in hand with the irrigation of the soil by the periodical flood, which takes the place at once of rain and of manure. The yearly rise of the stream had, indeed, long before Joseph's day, been the direct source of Egyptian civilization; for the necessity of an extended system of canals, and of a supervision of the boundary marks of individual properties, often effaced by the inundations, first enforced attention to astronomy as the only guarantee of correct measurement of time; and also to architecture and geometry, by the help of which strong dams could be built and a network of canals led off from the central stream. And it is a striking fact that the only part of the Egyptian religion received through the whole country, and not in some localities only—the worship of Isis and Osiris, with the gods and myths related to them—was closely connected with the phenomena of the Nile. In its rise it was called Osiris—the Fructifier of the Land—and was typified by the male ox;[1] while in its overflow it bore the name of his wife and sister, Isis—the Fruitful Mother—or of Hathor, the goddess of fruitfulness, both of whom were worshipped under the symbol of the cow, or with the head of a cow, as is constantly seen on the monuments, and as is shewn by many images in the great museum at the Gizeh Palace. "Among the stars," says Plutarch, "Sirius is consecrated to Isis, because it brings moisture. As the Nile, according to the Egyptians, is an emanation of Osiris, they believe also that their land is the body of Isis; that is, the part of it enriched by the river when it overflows. From this union Horus is born, and this Horus is the sea-

[1] Dillmann, p. 426.

son or the temperature of the air which quickens and nourishes all things."[1] When, therefore, the kine rose out of the bed of the Nile, it was inevitable to recognize in them the symbol of Isis-Hathor—that is, of the fertility of the land.

It is, indeed, striking to notice how thoroughly the Egyptian world realized its dependence on its great river. Fixed standards to note its periodical rise had in the earliest ages been set up in its course, from Nubia to the Delta; and from these the people were wont, each summer, to read their future. Then, as now, at Memphis, from December to the end of June no noticeable change took place in the stream, and the images of Isis-Hathor were draped in black, as mourning for the dryness of the soil. But from the last days of June it begins to rise and continues to do so for the next three months. Then, at the end of September; comes the beginning of the ebb, the flood from the equatorial regions caused by the melting of the snows there on the lofty mountain ranges, and by the rain floods of the great lake regions. This sinking of the waters leaves the land exposed so that it dries during October, which is the month for sowing, though not always, for, in some exceptional years, the overflow still covers the low Delta lands as late as January and even February. The harvest, usually, begins with the opening of March: the river, meanwhile, shrinking more and more till the end of June, when the rise once more commences. For the seven months, from July to December, these phenomena were in ancient times, as they are now, the source of great rejoicing. The image of Isis-Hathor, the goddess symbolizing the beneficent river, the Mother of Egypt, decked in gala robes, was car-

[1] *Isis et Osiris.*

ried round, each month, in solemn procession, and all was gladness. At Memphis, Joseph's town, as elsewhere, the one great topic of each summer and autumn must have been the daily reports of the Nilometer of the city, which seems to have been especially noted; the estimates of the height of inundations which have come down to us from antiquity seeming to have been taken from it. In the time of Herodotus, some 1,300 years after Joseph, from 22 to 26 feet of flood, only, were needed to secure a plentiful harvest; but the rise of the land, through the deposit of Nile mud, now requires that the waters reach a height of 39 feet to cause an adequate inundation.[1]

The second dream is only the complement of the first, and must have been full of meaning to a land like Egypt, which grew the heaviest wheat in the world, and yet often had fields of empty ears when the khamsin had been blowing; a land which believed that, in Elysium, the blessed did not pass their existence in enervating rest, but rejoiced in richly watered cornfields which they themselves sowed and reaped; where the kings bore ears of wheat in their hands at high festivals; where crowns of wheat-ears were put on deified princesses; and where the harvest goddess could be spoken of as she who filled the garners with grain.[2]

The alarm of the Pharaoh at such dreams, followed by his summoning "all the magicians and wise men of Egypt," is true alike to the importance attached to dreams by the Egyptians, and to the arrangements of the court at Memphis. A council of priests of various orders were in constant attendance upon the king, to guide every act of his daily

[1] Brockhaus' *Lexicon*, art. "Nil." Ebers (*Ægypten*, p. 355).
[2] Ebers' *Ægypten*, p. 360. *Eine Ægyptische Königstochter*, vol. i. p. 198.

life, and to interpret the will of the gods, as shown in omens, visions, or signs of the heavens. Every large temple had its college of priests, over whom one presided as chief; and each class of the priesthood in these colleges had, under this head dignitary, a president of its own. From among the high-priests, moreover, the foremost men were chosen as a hierarchy for all Egypt, and of these a selected number, the most eminent in dignity, lived in the royal palace to attend on the king; one, selected from them, acting apparently as sovereign pontiff of all Egypt.

When, however, weighty questions, such as that of these dreams, had to be solved, this standing council of high ecclesiastics, which seems to have been twenty in number, was augmented by the heads of the great temples throughout the country, and the united body were invited to aid the king in his perplexity. There were many classes of priests, but only two are named in Genesis[1] on this occasion—the Hachamim, or wise men; and the Hartummim,[2] the "Holy Scribes" or "Revealers of Secrets;" but these are doubtless named as including the council as a whole. They did not affect to speak by direct inspiration in giving their interpretations, but confined themselves to consulting the holy books, and to performing magical rites; and deep, no doubt, would be the study of the one, and abundant the performance of the other, at such a crisis. That Joseph, after their failure, should have at once given so just a solution, without having any holy books, but in the far higher way of direct inspiration, explains the reverence in which he was forthwith held.

The recurrence of years of famine in Egypt, from a

[1] The words used in the Hebrew are the exact Egyptian terms.
[2] Ges., *Thes.*, col. i. p. 1194.

failure in the rise of the Nile, receives vivid corroboration from the monuments and inscriptions. Thus, in the tombs of Beni Hassan, Ameni, a high civil and military officer of King Usurtasen I. of the Twelfth Dynasty, under which it is generally thought Abraham visited Egypt, records of himself in posthumous praise, on the walls of his burial chamber: "For years I exercised my power as governor in the nome of Mah. All the works for the palace of the king were placed in my hands. The chiefs of the temples of the gods of the nome of Mah gave me thousands of *bulls* (*so*) with their calves. I was praised on the part of the royal palace because of the yearly delivery of cows in milk. I gave up all their products to the palace, and I kept back nothing for myself. The whole nome of Mah worked for me with multiplied activity. But I never afflicted the child of the poor. I have not ill-treated the widow. I never disturbed any owner of land. I never drove away the herdsmen. I never took away his men for my works from the master who had only five. There were none wretched in my time. The hungry did not exist in my time, *even when there were years of famine.* For, behold, I had all the fields of the district of Mah ploughed, up to its frontiers, both south and north. Thus I found bread for the inhabitants, and gave them the food which they produced. There were no hungry people in it. I gave equally to the widow and the married woman. I did not prefer a great personage to a humble man in all that I gave away; and, when the inundations of the Nile were great, he who sowed was master of his crop. I kept back nothing for myself from the revenues of the field." [1]

[1] Brugsch's *History of Egypt*, vol. i. p. 137.

"Years of famine" had thus scourged the land generations before those of the Pharaoh's dreams; but an old inscription, whose author must, in the opinion of Brugsch, have been a contemporary of Joseph, brings before us, it may be, the very calamity to which the young Hebrew owed his wonderful change of fortune. One of the tombs at El Kuh has revealed this strange relic of the remote past, which is interesting on more grounds than one. On the wall, opposite the entrance to the tomb, the dead man's story proceeds :—

"The chief at the table of princes, Bab, the risen-again speaks thus: I loved my father, I honoured my mother; my brothers and my sisters loved me. I stepped out of the door of my house with a benevolent heart. I stood there with refreshing hand, and splendid were the preparations I collected for the feast-day. Mild was my heart, free from noisy anger. The gods bestowed on me a rich portion on earth. The city wished me health, and a life full of freshness. I punished the evil-doers. The children who stood opposite me in the town,[1] during the days I lived, were, small as well as great, sixty; there were prepared for them as many beds, as many chairs, as many tables. They consumed 120 epha of doura,[2] the milk of 3 cows, 52 goats, and 9 she-asses; a hin of balsam, and 2 jars of oil.

"My speech may appear untrue to some, but I call to witness the god Month that it is true. I had all this prepared in my house. In addition, I gave cream in the pantry and beer in the cellar in a more than sufficient number of hin measures.

[1] His own family.

[2] Dhourra, still a common food in Africa, is a kind of millet. It is only given in this country to birds; but is often used, when ground, to make sweet cakes, in Egypt and elsewhere. It is a kind of cultivated grass, and it is grown in the Holy Land for use as bread. In Egypt, the "heads" are large bunches of seed.

"I collected the harvest, for I was a friend of the harvest god. I was watchful at the time of sowing, and now, *when a famine arose, lasting many years, I issued corn to the city to each hungry person.*"[1]

Such famines, extending through a number of consecutive seasons, owing to the deficiency of water in the Nile, were very rare; indeed, history knows only one other instance, but it is a striking parallel to the long drought in the days of Joseph, for it lasted from A.D. 1064 to A.D. 1071, a period, like that of the low Nile in the Bible story, of seven years. Hence, as the quotation respecting the ancient famine is from the tomb of a contemporary of Joseph, it seems as if it were an independent notice of the very same calamity as Genesis records.

The hasty summons of Joseph from the prison, at the suggestion of the cup-bearer, to interpret the Pharaoh's dreams, is no less true to Egyptian customs than the rest of the narrative. Notwithstanding the urgency, he had to "shave himself," and change his garments, before he could "come in unto Pharaoh;" a necessity explained by the fact that no one could appear before the majesty of Egypt unless he were, in all respects, ceremonially clean; which included the shaving of the whole body, careful bathing, and a perfectly clean suit of raiment. The duty he was to perform was, besides, a priestly one; and the very word for priest, in Egyptian, means "the pure" or "clean." All priests were required to be absolutely hairless, as a part of their purity, the only exception being when they were mourning for death; and, indeed, all Egyptians who wished to be "clean" were required to undergo the same strange purification.[2] Wigs were, therefore, worn by priests and laymen alike, to cover

[1] Brugsch, vol. i. pp. 263–4.] [2] Herod., ii. 37, 41, 47, 77.

the smoothly shaven skull, and false beards were equally common: an unshorn chin marking a foreigner or a person of humble position or doubtful life. The great masses of hair we see on the heads of priests and kings in the paintings are, hence, only the triumphs of art, and the formal beards on the statues are equally artificial. Joseph would be required to submit to this priestly law; for the ghostly council round Pharaoh, who himself had to be admitted into the priestly caste before he could ascend the throne, dictated every particular of his daily life, and insisted on their rules being carried out to the least detail by every one who approached him. The repeated washing of the whole person before an audience could be granted, was no less imperative, and clothes fresh from the washers must be put on. We read, in fact, of the "washermen" of Pharaoh and of their "chief," a dignitary of no mean rank in a country where the rules of ceremonial purity were so exacting. Joseph must have exchanged the simple blouse which he, like all other common people, wore in prison, for rich garments, provided for him, before he entered the chamber of presence.[1]

It was no light matter for one outside the priestly caste to venture to interpret a dream, much less that of the Pharaoh; for a slave who busied himself with the secret knowledge reserved by the hierarchy to themselves, was liable to death. It must, therefore, have been an anxious moment for Joseph, when he waited to see how his interpretation was received; but its correctness was so instantly apparent, and the policy

[1] Riehm, p. 761. Dillmann, p. 427. A letter of a scribe which has survived, describing the troubles of each position of life, says: "The barber shaves even till night. He has no rest except when he eats. He goes from house to house to seek custom. He wears out his arms to fill his stomach." Maspero, p. 123. A bronze razor, preserved in the Louvre, is of the same shape as ours, and its edge is still keen. De Rougé. *Notice des Monuments Egyptiens* (1855), p. 78. To be called bald was an insult among the Jews (2 Kings ii. 23).

recommended so sound and shrewd, that the result was not for a moment doubtful. With the suddenness of despotic countries, the slave of the moment before found himself raised to be Grand Vizier of the whole land. Pharaoh and his court, recognizing, as they did, the interpretation of dreams as a divine gift, and tracing all insight into the future as sent from above, could have no one so fit to put in the highest authority as a man thus inspired.

He was therefore set at once over both palace and nation; the whole population being placed under his orders;[1] the only honour reserved by Pharaoh for himself being that he occupied the throne. The formal investiture is illustrated in each particular by the monuments. The royal signet-ring transferred from the hand of the Pharaoh to that of Joseph was his warrant, as prime minister of the land; the sacred cartouche on it, when rubbed over with ink, and then pressed on any state paper, giving a document the force of a decree. Indeed, this mode of attaching the royal signature is still everywhere in use in the East, to give validity to official papers, and it is also the mode followed even in private life and by the various departments of public authority. Clothing of fine cotton and linen,[2] the dress of the priests, the highest class in Egypt, marked his adoption into the priestly order; and the special golden neck-chain put on him was the official sign to all, of his authority.[3] Forthwith, the second royal chariot, set at his disposal, carries him through the streets of Memphis, to make known his elevation; heralds running before it with the cry,

[1] Dillmann, p. 428. The above is the sense of Gen. xli. 40.

[2] The word includes both. The delicacy of the best Egyptian linen may be judged from the fact, that whereas the finest linen in India—the finest now in the world has only 100 threads in an inch of the warp and 84 in the woof, that of Egypt has at times 140 in the warp and about 64 in the woof. Wilkinson, vol. ii. p. 77.

[3] Gesenius aptly says *the* Chain, as we say *the* Order. *Thesaurus*, p. 361.

Abrek, abrek—"bow the knee," "cast yourselves down" before him.[1] The Arabs, strange to say, still use the cry, Abrok, when they are about to alight from their camels or asses.[2]

In after times, Egyptian legend confounded Joseph with Moses, and changed the first part of the name, which was taken from "Jehovah," into part of the name of the god Osiris, so that it became Osarsiph, and this personage was then described, not as holding the office held by Joseph, but as the leader of the Jews out of Egypt. The name given him by Pharaoh, however, was different, and receives a striking explanation from Brugsch. He reads it Zap-u-nt-p-aa-Auk,[3] which is not far from the Psonthomphanēk of the Greek Bible; and translates it as meaning, in the mode used by the Greeks of the age of the Ptolemies, "the monarch of the Sethroitic nome;" that is, of the district in the extreme north-east of Egypt. In the mouth of an Egyptian of Joseph's time, however, he tells us, it was equivalent to "the governor of the abode of Him who lives," and he explains this as a reference to the god Ankh, with whose

[1] The words, Gen. xli. 40, "According unto thy word shall all my people be ruled," are literally, "thy mouth shall all the people kiss." The phrase, perhaps, comes from the practice in the East of kissing anything received from a superior, and pressing it to the forehead, to imply obedience at the risk of life. See Rosenmüller, *Morgenland*, vol. i. p. 192; also Gesenius, *Thesaurus*, p. 923 b; and Wilkinson's *Anct. Egyp.*, vol. ii. p. 203. But in ancient Egypt it was, in effect, the designation to supreme office, for the title of "the grand mouth" was that of a high functionary of the Pharaohs. We read of one who was "grand mouth to the whole land," and, as such, the officer to whom all authority was confided. And in the same way, when Set-Nekt wished to give Rameses III. a share in his power, he raised him to the dignity of "grand mouth of the land of Egypt." Chabas, *Récherches sur la XIX. Dynastie.*

[2] Chabas, *Études sur l'Antiquité historique*, pp. 408–412.

[3] Brugsch notices that the name in the Bible, Zaphnatpaneakh, corresponds "letter for letter" with this. Rosenmüller and others explain it as a pompous title, meaning "Saviour of the world," but the Egyptians called Egypt "the world." Ges., *Thes.*, p. 1181 b. *Das A. und N. Morgenland*, vol. i. p. 195. Dillmann, p. 229. *Congress of Orientalists* (1874), p. 269.

name that conferred on Joseph concludes. This deity, we are told, was the same as the god Thom, who had splendid temples at On and Heliopolis, close to Memphis, and was also the tutelar god of Succoth, in Joseph's new district. Ankh, however, was especially the god of the town of Pi-Thom, and bore the name of the "great God"—the word Ankh itself meaning "Life"—"He who lives," or "the Living (one)." Can it be that this is an unconscious recognition of the true God, lingering still in Egypt, as it had survived in Abraham's day, in the instances of Abimelech and Melchizedek, in Canaan? As Brugsch says: "It is the only time a like name for a god, which appears to exclude the idea of idolatry, is met with in Egyptian texts." Nor would it be strange if it actually referred to Jehovah, since the eastern side of the Delta had for ages been more or less peopled by Semitic settlers, or wandering shepherds; who might well have brought with them the holy tradition of the Living God, which was still faintly acknowledged in their first seat, beyond the Euphrates. That Joseph should have been set specially over a district of which the tutelary god was "The Living One," is, at least, noteworthy. It is singular, moreover, to find that a serpent, to which the Egyptian texts give the title "the magnificent," "the splendid," was the living symbol of Ankh; for this seems to transport us to the scene in the desert, when Moses was told to make the brazen serpent, and to connect itself with the fond superstition which made Israel burn incense to that sacred relic, till Hezekiah put down this serpent worship by destroying its object.[1]

Joseph himself tells us that his elevation had made him

[1] Brugsch, in *Congress of Orientalists* (1874), p. 269. *History*, vol. ii. p. 349.
[2] Gen. xlv. 8.

an Ab en Pirao[2]—which is wrongly translated in our version —"a father to Pharaoh," and that he was "Lord[1] of all his house." The former title is a strictly Egyptian one, and is often found in the ancient papyri, as that conferred on the supreme officials of the court. Several of the texts preserved in the British Museum, written by the sacred scribes and officers of the Pharaohs, allude to the Ab en Pirao; his high rank being vividly shown by the profound respect with which he is mentioned. An illustrious marriage alone was now required to make the dignities of the new favourite complete, and this was presently arranged by the Pharaoh himself. Asenath, "devoted to Neith," the daughter of Potipherah, "devoted to," or "the gift of," "the Sun-god," a priest of the great university temple of the Sun, at On, close to Memphis, became his wife, and thus he was finally incorporated into the highest class in the land, the priesthood.

The Pharaoh under whom Joseph was thus advanced is now known to have been one of the foreign race, known as the Hyksos, or Shepherd Kings, who for over five hundred years held sway in Egypt, after they had overthrown the native dynasty. It has been thought, indeed, that by reckoning back the 430 years of the sojourn of the Hebrews on the Nile, from the time of the Exodus, it would be found that the reign of Apophis, or Apepi, a Hyksos king, is reached—the very one, who, according to ancient authorities, raised Joseph to be the Adōn, or second personage in the State. A striking discovery, however, made lately, while confirming the belief that Joseph flourished under the Hyksos, introduces another name as that of the Pharaoh who raised him to honour. In his

[1] Lord = *Adōn*, a Semitic word adopted by the Egyptians as the title of the "captain of a district;" then, for the chief officer of a palace. Brugsch, vol. i. p. 221.

excavations at Bubastis, Mr. Naville found several statues unmistakably of Hyksos kings, though the dominions of these intruders had not, hitherto, been thought to have extended so far south. An architrave was also found, bearing the name of Apepi, the most famous of these kings, and a colossal head, of the Hyksos type, wearing the insignia of Egyptian royalty. Another still more important statue was also unearthed, bearing the names and titles of an absolutely unknown king. The inscription describes him as the worshipper of his Ka, or ghost, and, when shewn to the Mohammedan in charge of the Gizeh Museum, it was said at once by him to be "Joseph's Pharaoh"—called Reiyan—the son of El-Welid, in the Arab books. Ra-ian, which was another name of this king, on the cartouches, may be read Ian-Ra, and is curiously like the name Jannus, quoted by Josephus from Manetho. Tradition says that the Hamites who peopled Egypt had been ruled over by women, for some time, and that this tempted invasion. An Amalekite king from Syria, by name El-welid, consequently invaded the Nile region, and established his rule over it. Under his son, Joseph, it is said, came to Egypt. The name on the statue and that given by tradition are so very much alike, however, that it seems as if the one justified the other.

That Joseph was an Asiatic, and, indeed, a Syrian, would naturally recommend him to the intruding Syrian or Asiatic dynasty, and would explain the prosperity and rapid multiplication of his race, after his brothers arrived in Goshen, for it must have benefited during the much longer period of its stay on the Nile, by living under Pharaohs of its own Asiatic blood. It was only, indeed, after the Hyksos had been driven out, and the Eighteenth Dynasty of native Pharaohs had gained the throne, that "a new king arose who

knew not Joseph," the restored royal house being naturally bitterly hostile to all who had been connected with the shepherd races, from whom they had suffered so much.

The strange story of these Semitic invaders must be left to a future chapter, but one or two points fall properly to be noticed here. Joseph seems to have been brought to Egypt about 1,730 years before Christ,[1] and to have found that, like other Asiatics, the Hyksos kings had imported and promoted the worship of a favourite god. The Semitic immigration, which for ages had prevailed in the eastern part of the Delta, and had, indeed, made it possible for the Hyksos to seize the Egyptian throne, by the gradual preponderance in that region of warlike tribes of their race, had also led to a gradual blending of the customs, and even of the religions, of the Egyptians and of these foreigners. Syrian idols were introduced and in the end largely worshipped, even by the native population, and of these Sutech was the chief.[2] This deity the Hyksos chose as the supreme god of their newly-acquired country, building at Zoan-Tanis, and Avaris, grand temples to him, adorned with sphinxes, a strange human-faced animal form introduced by them—and rejecting the worship of any other god of the land.[3] This Sutech, or Set, known also as Nub, or "the golden," was simply the Syrian god Baal, or, more particularly, Baal Zapuna, the Baal-Zephon, or god of "the North Wind"[4] of Scripture, if Brugsch be correct.[5] In this Sutech, no less eminent an authority than Dr. Birch has recognized "the One only and true God, as distinct from all other deities;" but this attractive fancy has, it is to be feared, little to support it. On the

[1] Brugsch, vol. i. p. 260. Maspero, p. 174. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 211.
[3] Brugsch, vol. i. p. 239. [4] Ebers' *Durch Gosen*, p. 511.
[5] Brugsch, vol. i. p. 242.

contrary, Sutech-Baal appears in Egypt as the principle of Evil, the enemy of light and of good in the seen and unseen worlds.[1] He seems, in fact, to have been the same as Baal-Typhon[2]—with which, indeed, the name Zephon sounds very much alike—and, if so, he was pre-eminently the god of darkness and of evil, to whom the unfruitful sea, the wild desert, and the storm were the congenial home. His idol was painted red, and human sacrifices were offered to it.[3] After the Hyksos were expelled, we find the dynasty of Rameses adopting this repulsive worship, but with the change of honouring Sutech as the god of victory; which he already was, in one aspect, among the Hittites of Syria.[4] But the popular estimate of his attributes is better seen in his having the hideous river horse, or hippopotamus, ascribed to him as his sacred emblem, and in the myth of his being destroyed at last in this form by the god Horus, or Light, in the shape of the winged disk of the sun.[5] The idea of his representing Jehovah worship must, therefore, we fear, be abandoned, however pleasant it would have been to have recognized in the friend of Joseph a worshipper of the God of the Hebrews.

Twelve or thirteen years had passed since Joseph was "stolen from the land of the Hebrews," but he had now reached the height of prosperity, after vicissitudes such as could only happen in an Eastern despotism. He was still a young man of thirty, and found himself a member of the royal order of the priesthood, with the chain of high office round his neck, and the signet ring of the Pharaoh on his

[1] Brugsch, vol. i. p. 236.

[2] Ebers' *Durch Gosen*, p. 510.

[3] Plutarch, *Isis et Os*, 32.

[4] See his name as the god of many Canaanite cities, in the treaty made by them with Rameses II. Brugsch, vol. ii. p. 72.

[5] Ebers' *Durch Gosen*, p. 510.

hand—the virtual ruler of the greatest country of the then known world.[1] Two sons born to him helped to efface the bitter memories of the past—Manasseh, "he who makes me forget" my sorrow; and Ephraim, "double fruitfulness," for "God had made him fruitful in the land of his affliction." Against his policy in reference to the famine, it is impossible not to protest; for though the impost of twenty per cent. ultimately laid by him on the produce of the land, might not be oppressive in a country so rich as Egypt, the steps by which he advanced to this final arrangement involved the permanent abasement and harsh impoverishing of the whole rural population for the benefit of the reigning despot. A man who could force the millions of his fellow subjects to sell their property of every kind, and in the end even their liberty and that of their families, to buy back enough of the grain they had themselves raised on their own soil, to keep them alive, could have no heart.[2] For him only one person, his patron and employer, had any rights; and to swell his wealth to untold greatness, all his subjects, to rule whom justly and for the general good he held his high position, were crushed into slavery and dependence. No condemnation of so shamefully inhuman a policy can be too severe.

[1] *Ægyp. Königstochter*, vol. i. p. 232.

[2] The taxes in Turkey are 50 per cent. of the produce, and in Persia, 75 per cent. Dillmann, p. 459. In chap. xlvii. 21, the Septuagint, Samaritan and Vulgate read thus: "As for the people, *he made slaves of them*," etc. A parallel to the elevation of Joseph has been detected by some in that of Sinehe, the fugitive Egyptian who, after having risen to greatness among the Amu, returned to Egypt, and was greatly honoured by the reigning Pharaoh. But he was an Egyptian, not a Semite. (*Records of the Past*, vol. vi. p. 131.) An inscription in the Museum of Turin furnishes a curious illustration of Joseph's history, in at least one particular. It is the funeral record of one Beka. "The Overseer of the Public Granaries, and Controller of Upper and Lower Egypt." The name Beka means "servant" or "slave." He preserved the favour of the king to the last. The inscription tells his own opinions of his virtues and is interesting on many grounds. He had been just and true, and without malice.

That no intimation of Joseph's safety and elevation to honour under Pharaoh should have reached his father's tents at Be-ersheba seems to throw even a darker shadow on the character of his favourite son than the hideously inhuman course by which he wrung the whole soil of the country from the population for the aggrandizement of his master. The road from Egypt to Palestine was busy with caravans and travellers passing continually to and fro, the Shepherd Kings and their people naturally keeping up close relations with the regions from which they had come, and commerce, in many branches, creating a brisk and far-reaching intercourse. Messages or letters could thus at any time have been sent by Joseph to his father. That he never sought, through a long series of years, to dispel the agony which his sudden disappearance, as he knew, must have caused a parent so loving and indulgent, is hard to explain except on grounds little creditable to the son toward whom his partiality had been so marked and apparently so fatal. His good fortune is only discovered by the accident of his brethren having to come to the Nile valley for corn; and even then, he allows them to return to Jacob without making himself known, and adds the terrible demand that Benjamin, the only remaining child of the wife of his father's soul, should be sent to Egypt, before Simeon, the hostage kept from among his brethren, was released. The narrative of the meeting is beautifully told. Joseph, so long lost, is

From his birth to his death he had always been truthful. "So I have heard," says he naïvely. Love to his father and mother dwelt in his heart, nor had he ever forgotten his obligations to them from his tenderest childhood. Living in the court, he had gained the affection alike of the king and of his courtiers. Strange to say, there are no allusions to the gods of Egypt, in his inscription, such as are generally the staple of such compositions. He seems to have had a simple creed—"to have God in his heart, and to seek to know and follow His commands." Chabas, *Trans. Soc. Bib. Arch.*, vol. v. pp. 459, 464.

naturally not recognized in his Egyptian splendour and in his change from youth to manhood, but his brethren still wear the old dress of shepherds, and are easily remembered. Amidst them, however, there is no Benjamin. Have they murdered or sold Rachel's only other child, his one full brother? Alike to make them feel something of the anguish they had once caused himself, and to discover the truth as to his brother, Joseph could have taken no better course than to charge them with being spies. An invasion from the north-east was the standing danger of Egypt, to ward off which the eastern border of Egypt had been defended by the great fortified wall, from Suez to the Mediterranean; as China has been protected from the Tartars in a similar way. One, at least, must be left behind, a prisoner; while they go back with corn, and return, bringing their younger brother. That Joseph should swear by the life of Pharaoh, is strictly Oriental. The Egyptian king was worshipped as a god, and an oath by his life, like that of the Persians "by the king's head," would be reckoned more binding than any other. Strangely enough, the form was still in use in Egypt in the twelfth century, under the Caliphs, and was regarded as equivalent to pledging one's own life on his keeping his oath; for to break it was death.[1] Egyptian was spoken at court even under the Hyksos, so that an interpreter was required, and in the end nine of the brethren are allowed to return; Simeon, the second eldest, being left in prison as a hostage, rather than Reuben, the eldest, whose kind feeling in seeking, long before, to save his brother's life was thus remembered.

The gifts sent with Benjamin to the unknown dignitary at Pharaoh's court, to win his favour, mark an Eastern

[1] Rosenmüller, vol. i. p. 201. Michaelis, vol. v. p. 217.

custom still in force, never to approach the great without a present. But nothing could well be simpler than the offering of Jacob, of "the best fruits," or, as the word means, "the song" of the land—a little balm from Gilead, or rather from the hot valley of Jericho, a little dĕbash, or thickened syrup of grapes,[1] some gum tragacanth, some gum of the cistus or ladanum, some pistachio nuts from the terebinth tree, and some almonds. Cultivated fruits had not, apparently, as yet been grown in Canaan, so that only natural products could be offered. The grief of Jacob at losing Rachel's only remaining child, the eager pledges of Reuben and Judah to bring him back safely, and the double money to pay for the last and the present food, are natural touches that speak to the heart even now. But a new chapter in the strange drama was about to open: for, on reaching Egypt, with Benjamin, they were presently invited to the great man's palace.

The mansions of noble Egyptians stood within high walls, decorated with paintings; the entrance being by a huge gate, flanked at each side by lofty poles, from which floated long streamers. The gate opened on a wide paved courtyard, along the sides of which ran covered walks, supported on slender, painted wooden columns. A second high doorway at the back of this court led into the vast gardens of the mansion, with rows of fruit trees and trellised vines, clumps of shrubs, beds of flowers, and of vegetables. Palms, sycamores, and acacia trees, figs, pomegranates, and jasmine, grew in luxuriance; a large tank in the middle of the grounds supplying abundant water for the roots of the trees

[1] Not honey of bees, but what the Arabs still call *dibs*, a thickened syrup of grapes, still a great favourite in Egypt, to which three hundred camels' loads of it are sent each year from Hebron. Delitzsch, *Die Genesis*, vol. ii. p. 106.

and for the plants, and numerous gardeners seeing that all were duly cared for, and that the canals, which led the water from the Nile, were kept full by the labours of oxen, which turned water-wheels into them day and night.

At one side of this paradise rose the mansion, sometimes of one story high, at others of several, but always of vast extent. Almost all the rooms on the ground floor had separate doors, opening into a veranda, supported by coloured wooden columns, and running the whole length of the garden side of the house. A long row of storerooms, running at a right angle to this, closed the view behind, and hid away the garden produce, the wine jars, and the larder of the establishment.[1] The outside of the mansion, like the enclosing wall, was decorated with paintings or ornamental designs.

The furniture was in keeping with this exterior. Couches, sofas, and lounges, often of precious woods encrusted with ebony or ivory and set off with gilding, showed exquisite artistic skill in their fanciful shapes, like those of lions, sphinxes, horses, and other animals, and by their elaborate carving; and there was a profusion of tables of all sizes and designs, and elegantly carved chairs, of different kinds—at times of ivory, but always costly and beautiful. On the sideboard, tables, and consoles, stood artistically-worked Syrian drinking vessels of many forms: beautiful vases of gold, bronze, rock-crystal, or other precious material, filled with flowers, were everywhere; rare perfumes rose from alabaster cups, and the foot sank in the thick pile of the carpets that covered the floors,[2] or trod on the skins of lions and other ferocious beasts.

[1] Ebers' *Uarda*, vol. i. p. 123.

[2] *Uarda*, p. 137. *Eine Ægyptische Königstochter*, vol. i. pp. 14, 206. Vigouroux, vol. ii. p. 121. Wilkinson, vol. ii. pp. 136 ff. Lepsius, *Denkmäler*, vol. ii. p. 102.

The attendance was appropriately magnificent. Troops of slaves and officials ministered to every real or imaginary want of their lord. A band of priests took charge of the religious rites of the household, supported by scribes and astrologers. A confidential slave reigned over all the more private details of the establishment; his authority marked, as he daily went his rounds, by the curved baton of office which he carried. There were storekeepers, chair-bearers, basket-makers, gardeners, bailiffs, glass-blowers, gold-workers, tailors, barbers, shepherds, porters, hunters, fishermen, men for taking charge of the road; washermen in numbers, under a head washerman, to take charge of the linen; carpenters, potters, wood-cutters, bakers, and many more. Female slaves spun the flax into thread, prepared the skeins, and finally wove the linen of the household; and a whole multitude of others of both sexes had duties either outside the mansion or within it. The acrobat and the dancer, the harpist and the singer, and many others, strove to while away the dulness of their lord's evenings. His chief glory, however, was in his farm, with its flocks and herds, his household, with its throng of slaves and artisans, and in his luxurious yachts on the sacred river. The use of the horse had been introduced by the Hyksos, and doubtless in Joseph's day high dignitaries already boasted of their studs and chariots. The cat purred at the great man's hearth, the dog ran at his side, and he amused himself with pet apes. Oxen of different kinds fed in his meadows, and he hunted the gazelle and the antelope. Goat, veal, and beef, varied by hyæna, graced his table, but he shuddered like a Jew at the idea of pork, and cared little for mutton. Ducks, geese, doves, and pigeons, wild and tame, were as common as now, and domestic fowl abounded on every side. His bread was

generally of barley, varied by biscuits and pastry. Grapes, figs, and dates furnished his desserts, and wine and beer his drink. Dressed in pure white linen, he wore only sandals or walked barefoot; but gold collars, bracelets, and anklets showed his wealth, and he carried a wand for dignity.

Accustomed to the simple life of the tent, the splendour of such a dignitary must have awed his shepherd brothers, but their wonder, dashed with fear, must have been deepened when they were invited to eat with him; for the state of an Egyptian Grand Vizier was something of which till then they could have had no idea. The dining chamber was a decorated hall, resplendent with colour and gilding, and furnished with regal magnificence.

Slaves laid garlands of roses round the shoulders of the guests, and put wreaths of lotus blossoms on their heads, while others handed them wine and food from sideboards loaded with every delicacy and decked with flowers. Choirs of musicians during the dessert entered the chamber and played on harps, lutes, small drums, and flutes, the conductor beating time with his hands, and the company joining with measured clappings,[1] while female dancers added to their delight.[2] It may be that Joseph, though he had adopted Egyptian manners, avoided compliance with some particulars, but, as a whole, the iron force of prescription in so formal a country would doubtless make his mansion very much like that of others of his rank.

The delight of Joseph at the sight of Benjamin is heightened by the proof it gives that his brothers have not at least been guilty of a double crime. With true Eastern haste the creatures to be eaten at noon are cooked at once on being killed; water is brought to each guest that he may wash his

[1] *Uarda*, vol. ii. pp. 80–96. [2] Vigouroux, vol. ii. p. 127.

feet, as Egyptian politeness demanded;[1] the brethren bow themselves to the earth in Eastern fashion before the great man when he appears, having first made ready their gift to present to him. Joseph's eating at a table apart, as required by his priestly caste and high dignity, which would not allow him to eat with the laity; the placing another table for his Egyptian guests, who, though not of priestly rank, could not sit with "unclean" foreigners, are true to the old life they depict. Egypt was the Japan or China of early antiquity; shut out from intercourse with other countries as much as possible, and regarding their people, however cultured, as impure barbarians. The priests would eat or drink nothing that came from abroad; and, like the Hindoos with Europeans now, no Egyptian would use a dish or knife that had been touched by a foreigner.[2]

Joseph's sending food from his table[3] to his brethren, and marking his favour for Benjamin by honouring him with a succession of special delicacies, was characteristic of antiquity. In the same way Ulysses is honoured at a feast with the long chine of a white-toothed swine, and so also is Ajax;[4] and guests of Orientals, where specially welcome, are similarly distinguished to the present day.

The mixture of kindness and the reverse, in Joseph's subsequent act of again filling the sacks of his brethren with wheat and returning their money, but at the same time putting his "divining bowl" into the sack of Benjamin, appears to have its only explanation in the desire to test, in some decisive way, the feeling which the ten sons of other

[1] Wilkinson, vol. i. p. 76. [2] Strabo, xvii. 1, 6. Herod., ii. 41.

[3] Kings and priests ate flesh in Egypt, daily, if they liked. (Herod., ii. 37, 77.) The priests, however, abstained from mutton and pork, and some of them, like the Brahmins, were vegetarians. Dillmann, p. 440. Michaelis, vol. iv. p. 188.

[4] *Odyss.*, xiv. 437. *Ilias*, vii. 321.

mothers bore to the one of their number dearest to him as the son of Rachel; a result on which, doubtless, his future treatment of them depended. That he should have a divining bowl at all, is, however, out of keeping with his simple faith in the God of his father, in reverence towards whom he had, as a child, seen all such idolatrous and superstitious associations buried with contempt, beneath the terebinths of Shechem. But in so early an age, and amidst such a religious system as that of Egypt, entire superiority to superstition must have been difficult, while it might well consist with substantial fidelity to his hereditary faith, for when has superstition not found some hold even in the later ages of the Church?

The practice of divining by bowls of water or other fluid is of immemorial antiquity, and was widely spread; for we find traces of it in ancient India, Greece, Rome, and Egypt, as well as among the Hebrews, in this case of Joseph. Some terra-cotta vases in the British Museum, brought from Babylonia, and written over, inside, with magical spells, may perhaps even show, in the mixture of Hebrew, Rabbinical, and Chaldee words in these incantations, that such a form of divination obtained among the Eastern dispersion to a late period.

The word used by Joseph's steward for "divining" is itself peculiar, meaning, as it does, "to utter a low, whispering, hissing sound," and hence "to practise enchantment by uttering magic spells,"[1] which sorcerers did in whispers and mutterings. The name "kondu," given in the Greek Bible for the bowl, is also curious, for it has become naturalized in Arabic and Persian, and was the very

[1] "Nahash." It is used twice in Gen. xlv. 5, 15, and also, by Laban, Gen. xxx. 27. The name for a serpent, from its hissing, is Nahash.

word for the mystical saucers or dishes, in the shape of an Egyptian lotus flower, used by the ancient Indian priests in religious ceremonies, and also in Egypt itself, at the beginning of the third century of our era, for similar purposes. Indeed, Norden, the German traveller,[1] tells us that he saw a kind of fortune-telling there, last century, by dishes of water; and Lane, in his *Modern Egyptians*,[2] describes a form of pretended sorcery by looking into a drop of ink lying in the palm of the hand, as surviving still.

The modes in which these bowls were used in ancient times were doubtless various. One was by filling them with water and then putting into this small plates of silver or gold, or precious stones, with the likeness of the inquirer on them, the answer being reckoned good or bad according as the image was refracted on the surface.[3] Another was, by fastening a ring to a thread and hanging it over the water in the bowl, the oracle revealing itself by the taps of the ring on this or that part of the bowl, and also by their frequency or strength.[4] These were the modes known to Pliny. Psellus, a great theological writer of the Greek Church,[5] tells us that "divination by bowls was invented by the Assyrians, whose cleverness (in the use of them) was extreme." "The bowl was filled with water, which was made susceptible of

[1] Norden's *Voyage d'Egypte et de Nubie* (1752-55), vol. iii. p. 98. Norden says he had sent to the local dignitary with the usual presents, to ask protection and to show the firman of the Porte as his authority for wishing to visit the country. But the envoy was met by the answer, strikingly like that of Joseph to his brethren: "The firman of the Porte is nothing to me. I am, in this part, myself the Grand Seignior. I know already what kind of folks you are. *I have consulted my cup*, and I find you are those of whom our prophets have spoken -*Frenchmen in disguise, who would come, and by small gifts and pleasant, insinuating manners, go about everywhere, examine the state of the country; leave in the end to report at home, and finally return, with a multitude of other Frenchmen, to conquer the land and kill us all.*"

[2] Vol. ii. p. 362. Lenormant says he has seen this at Aleppo.

[3] Dillmann, p. 442.

[4] *Trans. Soc. Bib. Arch.*, vol. ii. pp. 114-117.

[5] Born A.D. 1020; died A.D. 1106.

prophetic inspiration by ceremonies and incantations used over it. This inspiration or divine force comes from the earth, and has only a partial action. When it enters the water it makes a sound which the diviners cannot interpret; but, when it spreads through the contents of the bowl, other confused sounds are heard, from which the knowledge of the future is drawn. This force, or breath, derived from the material world, has always an uncertain or obscure character, as if sent on purpose to help the diviners, by making it impossible at any time to convict them of deception." [1]

Delivered, by Joseph's self-disclosure to them, from their fear of slavery as the punishment for the apparent theft of the divining bowl, the future removal of his brethren with their father to Egypt is speedily arranged. Judah's offer to remain as a slave in place of Benjamin, the seeming offender, and the touching pathos with which he tells the story of Jacob's agony of soul for fear of this last remembrance of Rachel vanishing from him as Joseph had done, had shown that they are loyal to his brother, and overpowered him by tender recollections. Egyptian baggage and transport waggons are at their service, and they need not be anxious about bringing all their household stuff, for the good of all the land of Egypt is theirs. In Eastern fashion, they are dismissed with gifts of costly clothing [2] to wear on high days and great occasions; [3] the ten receiving each a suit, but Benjamin, his mother's son, five, with three hundred shekels of silver besides. "Ten asses laden with the good things of Egypt, and ten she asses laden with corn and bread and meat," for the use of his father on the way, complete the

[1] Quoted by Lenormant, *La Divination*, p. 80. Ephrem Syrus, *Opera omnia* (Rome, 1737), vol. i. p. 100.

[2] Not "changes of clothing," but literally "clothes to change," *i.e.*, to wear on grand days, instead of their common ones.

[3] Gen. xxvii. 15. Judg. xiv. 12, 19. 2 Kings v. 22.

present. The representation on the walls of the tombs of Beni Hassan, of the presentation of the Amu, or Semitic strangers, to a high officer of Pharaoh, described on an earlier page, may help to bring before the mind, the appearance of the Hebrew immigrants.[1]

Once more, then, in the Providence of God, the face of the chosen people is turned to the Nile; this time to find there a kindly shelter in which to grow strong enough to return, centuries later, not as a tribe, but as a nation. Slowly driving their flocks before them, Jacob and his encampment, numbering about seventy souls[2] connected with him by blood, but also a great multitude of slaves and dependents destined to be ultimately merged in the community, passed over the uplands of the south to Be-ersheba, the home and sanctuary of his fathers. There, as was fitting at such a time, sacrifices are offered to "El," the God of Isaac, and a vision of the night removes any remaining fear respecting the leaving Canaan. The days of his long sorrow for his lost son are at last over, and he can look forward to having his eyes closed by him, when his life is ended.[3]

Goshen,[4] a district on the north-east of Egypt, at last reached, Joseph sets forth in his chariot, with due retinue, to "go up" from the lower-lying Memphis, to see his father's face once more. "And Joseph presented himself unto him; and he fell on his neck, and wept on his neck much and long,[5] and Israel said unto Joseph, Now let me die, since I have seen thy face, because thou art yet alive."

[1] Page 316. See also Birch, *Egypt from the Monuments*, pp. 65–67.

[2] Seventy-five in the Septuagint, counting in five descendants of Ephraim and Manasseh. Exod. i. 5. Num. xxvi. 28–37. Deut. x. 22 (Sept.). Acts vii. 14.

[3] Arabs still go to Egypt in bad years, to live till better times come. Hitzig, *Geschichte*, p. 56.

[4] Goshen is derived by Hitzig from the Persian, Gauzen—a cow. *Geschichte*, etc., p. 60.

[5] Literally.

By dexterous arrangement, permission is soon obtained from Pharaoh that the new-comers should settle in the land of Goshen, as a district suited for pasture ; where, as Asiatics and tent-using shepherds, who were alike hated by the Egyptians, they would live apart from the native population, besides acting as an outlying garrison, in some measure, to defend the country they had adopted from invasion. Native shepherds were, indeed necessarily, numerous in the Nile valley, for it abounded in cattle and flocks,[1] and Pharaoh himself had herds ;[2] the monuments showing multitudes of asses, cattle, sheep, and goats, both royal and of private ownership. Woollen clothing was freely worn except on visits to the temples, or by the priests, or for the wrappings of the dead ; mutton was a common food, though prohibited to both kings and priests, only beef, veal, and geese being allowed to be eaten by them ; goats also were eaten, though, like sheep, they could be offered as sacrifices only in a few districts.[3]

Shepherds were not, therefore, hated simply for their calling, but from the associations which it brought up, of all that Egypt had suffered from the Arab tribes who, as "Hyksos," had lorded it so long on the Nile. Hence even in Joseph's day, the prejudice against a pastoral race demanded recognition, so that while the Egyptian shepherd caste lived freely in any part of the land, swineherds alone seeming to have been really abhorred, a tent-using community like Jacob's encampment could not be allowed to enter the thickly peopled districts. The Pharaoh himself, however, we are told, was pleased to find among them men accustomed to cattle, and chose from them chief herdsmen for his own stock. How vast that must have been, we can

[1] Gen. xlvii. 17. [2] Gen. xlvii. 6. [3] Herod., ii. 42, 46.

imagine from the bounty of Rameses III. to the temples, which amounted in the single instance of that of Thebes to no fewer than 91,223 cattle of different kinds, and in that of Heliopolis, to an additional 45,540.[1]

The interview of Jacob with the mighty Pharaoh is no less artless in its pathos than other parts of the narrative. It is natural to ask an old man his age, and as natural that the answer should be a comment on the life so nearly over. And so it was with the king. With touching dignity and simplicity Jacob speaks as one at the end of his career. In comparison with the lives of his fathers, its one hundred and thirty years had been short; for Abraham had lived one hundred and seventy-five years, and Isaac one hundred and eighty; and it had been "evil," for he thinks of the long and hard service he had had with Laban, and the troubles he had had in his household—the loss of Rachel and of Joseph, among others. It had indeed been a "pilgrimage," for life is that in any case, but still more truly in his—the dweller in tents, wandering hither and thither with his flocks, through all the past, and now in his last days entering a third land as his home. Appropriately, he leaves the presence of the Pharaoh, after asking for him an old man's blessing.

The last scene of the patriarch's life—his dying blessing on his sons—will be better considered hereafter; but the unwavering faith in the Divine promise of Canaan shines out strongly, in the command that he should be buried beside Abraham and Isaac in the cave at Machpelah. "And when

[1] *Harris Papyrus. Records of the Past*, vol. vi. pp. 36, 38, 47, 59. The history of Menephtah, the Pharaoh of the Exodus, offers us a striking analogy to the permission granted Jacob and his sons to settle in Egypt. A papyrus informs us that, under his reign, Shasu or Semites came to Egypt from Idumea, to pasture their flocks at Pi-thum, or Pithom, in the grazing land belonging to the king, and received permission from the king to establish themselves on it. (*The Papyrus Anastasi.*)

Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people. And Joseph fell upon his father's face, and wept upon him, and kissed him."

As an adopted Egyptian, Joseph naturally honoured his father by a costly embalming, the greatest desire of any Egyptian heart; from the universal belief that the fate of the soul depended on the preservation of the body. As first minister of state, and a high dignitary of the priestly caste, he had physicians in his service, for Egypt was rich in them, as a special order of the priesthood. The corpse would be carried to the spacious embalming houses outside the city, and left there forty days in the hands of those set apart to this dismal art. Thirty days more had to pass before the mourning was over, making seventy in all, only two less than for a king,[1] and then the wish of the dead could be fulfilled, by carrying him to Canaan. The days of mourning had seen Joseph's household abstaining from all amusements and luxuries, the bath, wine, fine dishes, or rich clothing: Joseph's beard and hair had been suffered to grow, and he had worn the special mourning dress.[2] If the funeral procession, at least in its starting from Memphis or On, was in other respects like that of a high Egyptian, it may even now be restored in fancy from the pictures on some of the tombs; but idolatrous details are so mixed up with others, that it is impossible to separate such as would seem natural in the case of a servant of the One God, like Jacob. We know, however, from Genesis,[3] that the cavalcade which escorted the body to its last resting place was at once large and illus-

1 Wilkinson, vol. ii. p. 374. Diod., i. 72.
2 Wilkinson, vol. ii. p. 374. Ebers' *Durch Gosen*, p. 529.
3 Chap. l. 7.

trious. The courtiers and ministers of state rode in it in their chariots; many of the slaves of Joseph swelled his train; the asses and vehicles of a pastoral tribe bore the "house" of Jacob—the children, only, remaining behind; and the whole cortége was guarded and made more striking by a force of Egyptian horse and charioteers. Having reached the open-air threshing floor, known as Atad, "the Cactus"—perhaps from thickets of prickly pear growing round—the bier rested for seven days,[1] while the air resounded with the wailings of the mourners, so characteristic of the East in all ages. Possibly, also, these days saw the funeral games with which, now, as then, Arabs are wont to circle round the grave of a chief.[2] Singularly enough, a seven days' lamentation for the dead still obtains in the communities east of the Jordan and Lebanon. It is observed in a black goat-hair tent set up on the threshing-floor, which lies usually on the west side of a village, the corpse being laid upon the thresher's wooden standing place in the middle of the floor.[3] The narrative seems to imply that they came, not by the direct road by El Arish and Be-ersheba, over which Jacob and Abraham had gone down to Egypt, but by a long circuit round the south of the Dead Sea and through the land of Moab and of Ammon—the track along which his descendants were hereafter to reach Canaan, under Moses and Joshua.[4] But the circuit necessary for such a

[1] 1 Sam. xxxi. 13. Judith xvi. 34. Eccl. xxii. 12.

[2] This is implied in the old interpretation, as in Rosenmüller and Clericus, of the name Beth Hoglah, given by St. Jerome to the spot. But the identification is very doubtful. The name, moreover, seems derived not from the dances round the bier or grave, but from the much more prosaic fact, that the partridge is very plenty in the neighbourhood—Beth Hoglah seeming really to mean "the place of partridges" (Riehm). Riehm thinks it was on the east of Jordan, but Winer and Kneucker think the writer speaks from the direction in which the procession was advancing—towards the Jordan—so that Atad would be on this side of it.

[3] Riehm, art. "Atad." [4] Knobel, p. 493.

journey makes it, one would almost think, out of the question; and gives great weight to the idea that Moses, writing on the east side of the Jordan, simply means that Atad was on the other, without stating where. St. Jerome indeed identifies it with a place called Beth Hoglah, near the Jordan, on the west side of the river: but there was another Beth Hoglah in the country of the Philistines, which is much more likely to have been the spot.[1] A play upon another name given by tradition to the scene, wherever it may have been, marks, however, the deep impression made by the incident on the popular mind: for henceforth the locality bore a name which equally meant, according to the pronunciation, "the meadow" or "the lamentation" of the Egyptians. The Cave of Machpelah, a few days later, received the new inmate: and there, in all probability, the mummy of Jacob rests still, uncorrupted.

Little more is told us of Joseph except that he bore himself kindly to his brethren after his father's death; that he lived one hundred and ten years, and saw Ephraim's grandchildren, and that he took the sons of Machir, the son of Manasseh, into his bosom—fondling and petting them in their infancy: a tender picture of the loving-heartedness of the old man, like that of Homer, when the nurse lays the new-born Ulysses on the knees of his grandfather Autolycus.[2] True to the end to the promise handed down from his fathers, Joseph disappears from our view leaving a solemn charge to his brethren to carry his bones out of Egypt with them, when God should lead them back to Canaan. The Egyptians were accustomed to place the embalmed bodies of their friends in mummy cases of wood, and lay them up safely in a tomb, or keep them in a special chamber in their own

[1] *The Land and the Book*, p. 580.

[2] *Odyss.*, xix. 401. See also Gen. xxx. 3.

houses. Joseph's mummy remained thus in possession of the Israelites till the Exodus, and was then taken by his descendants to Canaan, as he had made their forefathers swear to do, and laid finally at rest in the piece of ground at Shechem which Jacob had long before bought.[1] There, to this day, his tomb, rightly or wrongly, is pointed out under the shadow of Mount Ebal.[2] If this be the real tomb—and there is every reason to believe it is—then, underneath, is the sarcophagus, and even the mummy of Joseph, just as they were when deposited by the conquerors.

[1] Exod. xiii. 19; xxxiii. 19. Josh. xxiv. 32.

[2] *The Land and the Book*, p. 473. Mills (*Nablus*, p. 64) thinks it is the true site See also *Trans. Soc. Bib. Arch.*, vol. ii. pp. 80-82.

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